A's & GIANTS PREVIEWS • EXPANDED FANTASY COVERAGE

ATHLON SPORTS 2017 MLB PREVIEW

BASEBALL

NOW 224 PAGES
LARGEST PREVIEW ON NEWSSTAND

KHRIS DAVIS

HOME RUNS STRIKE BACK!

BUILD THE PERFECT BATTING ORDER

THE GREATNESS OF MIKE TROUT

TRADING FOR AN ACE

MADISON BUMGARNER

2007 DRAFT REVISITED
COLLEGE BASEBALL TOP 25
TOP 50 MLB PROSPECTS

ATHLONSPORTS.COM

DISPLAY UNTIL MAY 1, 2017

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

e-Oakland/dp/B01N6RZN1B

®/™ Trademarks © Mars, Incorporated 2016

IAMS.™ The ideal amount of protein and vitamins to help keep your dog healthy and active at every stage of life. So you can always look forward to what's next.

IAMS. GOOD FOR LIFE.™

Triumphant Tour

David Ortiz bid farewell to baseball with the greatest final season in the game's history. Ortiz led the majors in slugging (.620), OPS (1.021) and doubles (48), and he also belted 38 homers, giving him a career total of 541, 17th all time. Not a bad send-off for the future Hall of Famer.

AP Images

COGHLAN
8

Cubs win! Cubs win!

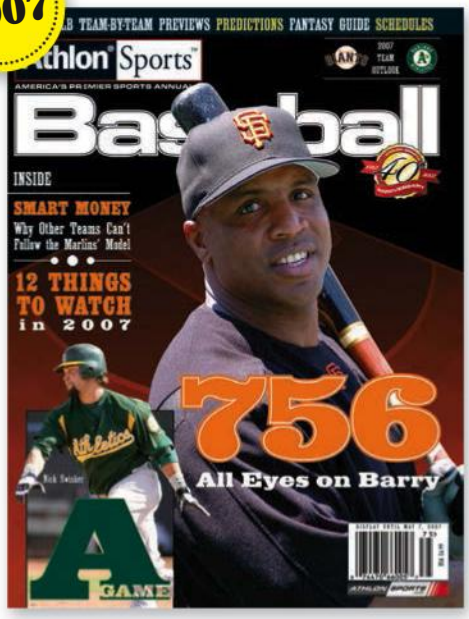
Holy Harry Caray — the drought is over. The Chicago Cubs, formerly baseball's lovable losers, ended 108 years of futility with a burst of euphoria following the final out of their Game 7 win over Cleveland. Chances are, the franchise won't have to wait another century for the next one; this team is built to win it again.

AP Photo/Gene J. Puskar

Athlon Sports BASEBALL Throwback Covers

REVISITING OUR 2007 AND 2012 ANNUALS

2007



2012

Coming into the 2007 season, Barry Bonds had one box left to check in his legendary, record-setting (and steroid-tainted) career. Bonds entered the season with 734 career home runs, leaving him 21 short of Hank Aaron's all-time record. By then, Bonds' enhanced pursuit of the all-time record was hardly accompanied by feelings of excitement or anticipation; for some, Aaron remains the all-time home run king. But it was still the top storyline heading into the season, and sure enough, on Aug. 7 of that year, Bonds went deep off the Nationals' Mike Bacsik for home run No. 756, and he was greeted by a typically classy congratulatory message from Aaron. Bonds would retire with 762 homers, a record that should remain safe for the foreseeable future (declining slugger Albert Pujols is the active leader with 591). But his remarkable career achievements have yet to get Bonds anywhere close to Cooperstown.

Five years later, we featured another controversial slugger, the Rangers' Josh Hamilton, who would set a career standard that year with 43 homers while continuing to battle for his sobriety. That season represented a career peak, and after multiple relapses and declining production, Hamilton could be down to his last opportunity this season.

In an era that is enjoying a power surge, these two offer stark reminders that a slugger's reign is never permanent and often fleeting.

ATHLON SPORTS
AMERICA'S PREMIER SPORTS PUBLISHER

EDITORIAL
Mitchell Light EXECUTIVE EDITOR
Robert T. Doster III SENIOR EDITOR
John Gworek SENIOR EDITOR
Martin Brady ASSISTANT EDITOR
Max Heldeman ASSISTANT EDITOR
Joseph Leray ASSISTANT EDITOR
Harrison McClary DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY
Daly Cantrell SENIOR DESIGNER

PRODUCTION
Mark Malone CIRCULATION DIRECTOR
Sam Payne PRODUCTION DIRECTOR

NATIONAL SALES
Tom Burr VP/SEG
Bill Gaglione VP/SEG
Anthony R. Hagelgans VP/SEG

DIGITAL GAMES
Eric Olson DIRECTOR
Tristan Gordon WEB DEVELOPER

ATHLON SPORTS RADIO
Braden Gall

CLIENT SERVICES
Jessica Gaines DIRECTOR
Maggie Noonan MANAGER OF PARTNER PROGRAMS
Charisse Lambert DIGITAL GAME TRAFFICKER

BUSINESS LOGISTICS (615-440-5580)
Susan Clifft Malone DIRECTOR

RDB HOLDINGS & CONSULTING, LLC (615-242-7984)
Richard Beck PUBLISHERS REP

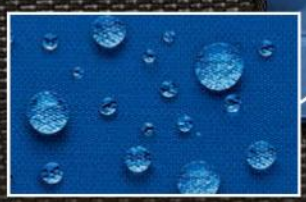
CORPORATE
Chuck Allen PRESIDENT, CEO
Mary Lee Vanderkooi CFO/TREASURER
Tracey Altman EVP
Lisa Delaney SVP/CHIEF CONTENT OFFICER
Richard McVey VP/EDITORIAL DIRECTOR
Marie Tassini SVP/DIRECT RESPONSE
Brad Dunn SVP/CHIEF DIGITAL OFFICER
Amy Chernoff SVP/GROUP PUBLISHER INTEGRATED MEDIA

@athlonsports
/athlonsports
www.athlonsports.com

We want to know what you think. Email:
editor@athlonsports.com

MAGAZINE MAIL ORDER
(877) 528-4566
athlonsports.com/store
2451 ATRIUM WAY,
SUITE 320
NASHVILLE, TN 37214
(800) 284-5668

Forecast: **NeverWet**



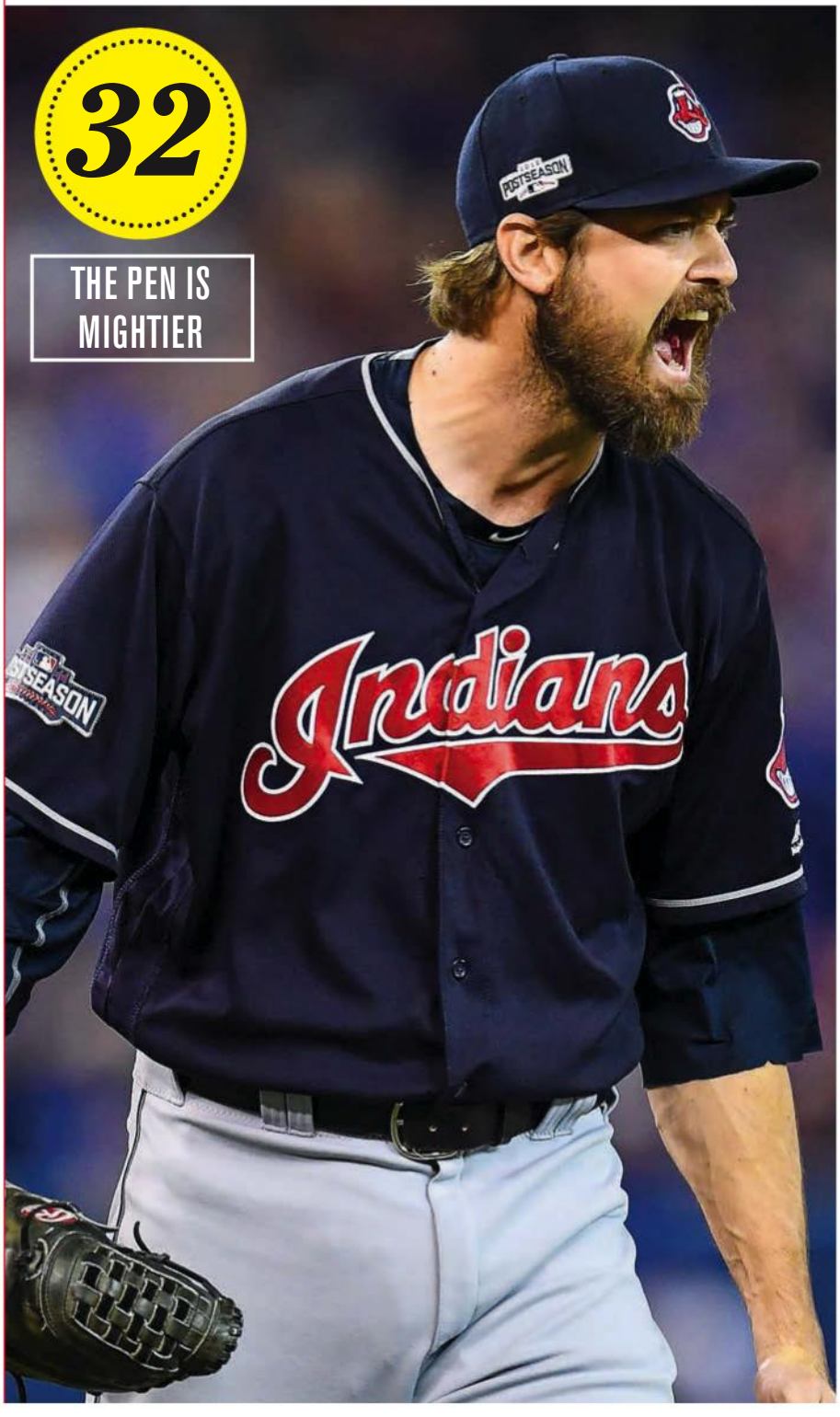
Superhydrophobic treatment

Experience Rust-Oleum NeverWet. A revolutionary, superhydrophobic treatment that causes liquids to form perfect spheres, so they roll off, keeping your things dry. Now available in fabric formulas, perfect for multiple uses, from the interior of your car, to boots and shoes and even outdoor cushions. Find out more at **rustoleum.com/neverwet**

RUST-OLEUM®

© 2015 Rust-Oleum

CONTENTS



10
SHORT HOPS
Calendar of the Weird headlines a fond look back.

18
FIRST TIME FOR EVERYTHING
2016 saw some amazing firsts.

20
17 THINGS TO WATCH
Storylines we'll have an eye on in 2017.

26
THE NEW CBA
Five takeaways from the new collective bargaining agreement.

28
RESTORING ORDER
Advanced analytics can help the astute manager build the perfect lineup.

32
THE PEN IS MIGHTIER
Clubs are getting creative with the all-important bullpen.

36
SEARCHING FOR AN ACE
It's not unusual for young aces to be traded before blossoming.

40
SWING FOR THE FENCES
A new plan at the plate has yielded a power surge.

44
THE GREATNESS OF MIKE TROUT
A celebration of this generation's best player.

46
2007 DRAFT REVISITED
David Price has paid off. As for the others? Hit and miss.

PURINA

THEY'RE ALWAYS GOOD SPORTS.

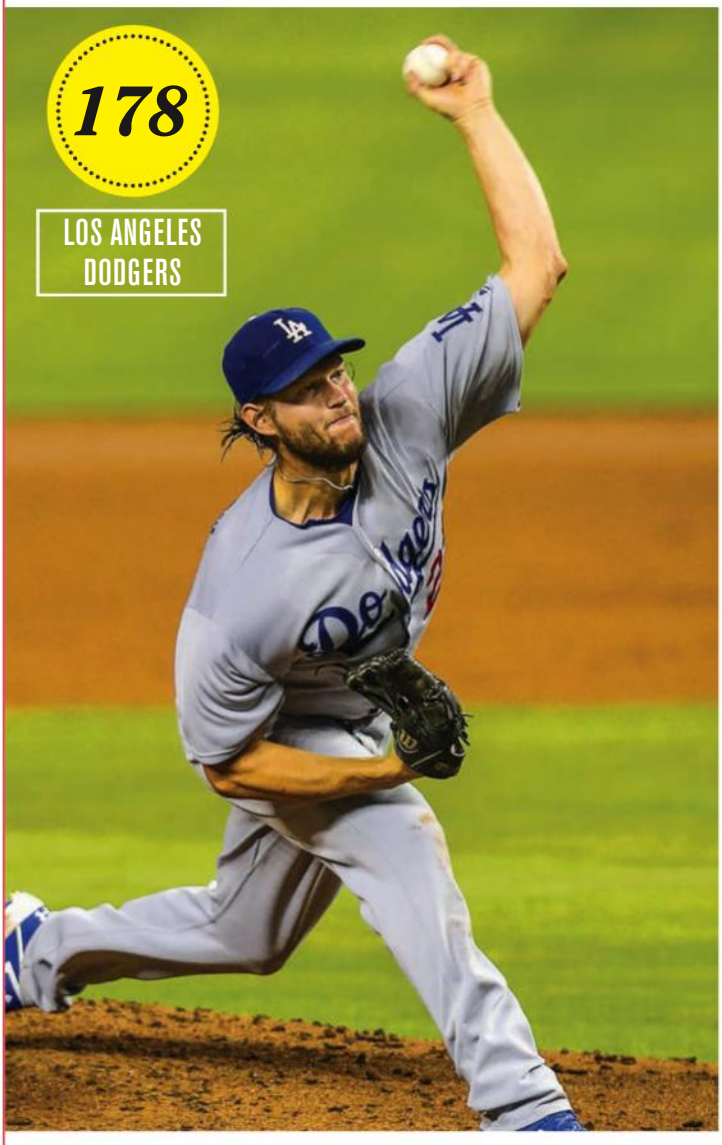
Help keep your pets happy, healthy and strong.

Your active pets will love the variety Purina's trusted family of brands has to offer. You'll love the nutritional science behind our pet products. Count on Purina for every stage of your pet's life. You'll find the right size and variety for every occasion.

Learn more at Purina.com.

All trademarks are owned by Société des Produits Nestlé S.A., Vevey, Switzerland, or are used with permission.

CONTENTS



AMERICAN LEAGUE TEAM PREVIEWS

66 American League Predictions

EAST DIVISION
68 Baltimore Orioles
72 Boston Red Sox
76 New York Yankees
80 Tampa Bay Rays
84 Toronto Blue Jays

CENTRAL DIVISION
88 Chicago White Sox
92 Cleveland Indians
96 Detroit Tigers
100 Kansas City Royals
104 Minnesota Twins

WEST DIVISION
108 Houston Astros
112 Los Angeles Angels
116 Oakland A's
120 Seattle Mariners
124 Texas Rangers

NATIONAL LEAGUE TEAM PREVIEWS

128 National League Predictions

EAST DIVISION
130 Atlanta Braves
134 Miami Marlins
138 New York Mets
142 Philadelphia Phillies
146 Washington Nationals

CENTRAL DIVISION
150 Chicago Cubs
154 Cincinnati Reds
158 Milwaukee Brewers
162 Pittsburgh Pirates
166 St. Louis Cardinals

WEST DIVISION
170 Arizona Diamondbacks
174 Colorado Rockies
178 Los Angeles Dodgers
182 San Diego Padres
186 San Francisco Giants

COLLEGE BASEBALL TOP 25 /// ***52***
2017 DRAFT PROSPECTS /// ***56***
FANTASY BASEBALL /// ***190***
TEAM STATS /// ***218***
GAMES BY POSITION /// ***220***
THE BACK PAGE /// ***224***

COVER PHOTO CREDITS: Bumgarner: AP Photo/Nick Wass; Betts: AP Photo/Elise Amendola; Swanson: AP Photo/Brett Davis; Buxton: Chris Bernacchi via AP; Bryant: Ezra Shaw/Getty Images; Beltre, Stanton, Marte, Goldschmidt, Davis, Molina, Syndergaard, Hosmer, Longoria, Kluber, Herrera, Arenado, Trout, Votto, Harper, Machado, Abreu, Bryant, Cabrera, Correa, Sanchez, Kershaw, Donaldson, Cano, Villar, Lindor: Tom DiPace

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: Andy Baggarly, Mike Berardino, Rick Bozich, Michael Bradley, Russell Carleton, JJ Cooper, Shi Davidi, Ryan Divish, Jack Etkin, John Fay, Derrick Goold, Bruce Herman, Paul Hoynes, Chad Jennings, Tyler Kepner, Roch Kubatko, Jack Magruder, Rob Mains, Tod Palmer, John Perrotto, Bill Plunkett, Todd Rosiak, Jim Salisbury, John Shea, Dave Sheinin, Eric Sorenson, John Tomase, Matt Trueblood,Mike Vorkunov, Ben Weinrib, Bernie Wilson, Jeff Wilson

Are you a Cubs fan living in California? A Yankees fan living in Florida? Order the cover that features your favorite team or player.

Go to **athlonsports.com/store** to see all of the 2017 MLB covers.

PRESEASON.
IN SEASON.
ALL YEAR.
ATHLONSPORTS.COM
ATHLON
SPORTS & LIFE
FOLLOW US AT
@ATHLONSPORTS
FACEBOOK.COM/ATHLONSPORTS
PINTEREST.COM/ATHLONSPORTS
INSTAGRAM.COM/ATHLONSPORTS

SHORT HOPS

That's a Clown Statement, Bro...

Bryce Harper to *Baseball America* in 2014: "Mike Trout is the best player in baseball, and I don't think anybody can argue with that."

Bryce Harper to *Baseball America* in 2015: "I still believe Trout is the best player in the game, hands down."

Bryce Harper to *ESPN the Magazine* in 2016: "I will never say anybody's better than me. Those words will never come out of my mouth."

...And So Are These

Twins rookie Jose Berrios, learning he'd been demoted to Triple-A in August after posting a 9.24 ERA in nine starts: "I'm surprised."

Berrios in September on being lifted after allowing three hits and a walk, hitting a batter and throwing a wild pitch in the span of nine hitters: "I felt like I was doing a good job of getting the batters out."

RULE #39

"There is no such thing as a coincidence."

So pontificates one of the great philosophers of our time, NCIS Special Agent Leroy Jethro Gibbs, in his book of unwritten rules. He clearly wasn't paying attention to the 2016 baseball season. Here are our top-15 coincidences of the year:

15. On May 23, all four California-based teams won via shutouts.

14. Adam Jones, Troy Tulowitzki and Hunter Pence each hit the 200th home run of his career in a two-day span.

13. After not having a game end in a tie in the last 20 years, there were two of them in the Pacific Coast League on May 30.

12. Dodgers pitcher Ross Stripling's first major league hit and victory on May 13 came against Michael Wacha, his former roommate at Texas A&M.

11. When Max Scherzer struck out 20 Tigers, the opposing skipper was Brad Ausmus, meaning that the former catcher either played or managed in three of the six such performances in history.

10. The most controversial play of the 2015 postseason was Chase Utley's slide in the NLDS that broke the leg of Mets shortstop Ruben Tejada. Last May 28, the Mets' Noah Syndergaard was ejected after throwing at Utley in retaliation, and Tejada was designated for assignment by the Cardinals.

9. Matt Kemp's home run ball of Sept. 22 was caught by Miami Heat forward Justise Winslow, who had thrown out the ceremonial first pitch of the game.

8. On July 6, Robinson Cano's 20th home run of 2016 was hit off Mike Fiers, the same pitcher against whom he connected for No. 20 in 2015.

7. In 2012, Arizona's Patrick Corbin cracked a bases-loaded triple. No other pitcher did that again until last April 27, when Adam Wainwright hit one — off Patrick Corbin.

6. On the Fourth of July, the Elias Sports Bureau discovered that Milwaukee's 1–0 defeat of Washington was the first game of that score played in D.C. in 100 years to the day.

5. The Orioles homered on June 30 for the 23rd consecutive season.

4. On Aug. 31, two players born on the very same day (Jose Abreu and Alex Avila) barreled up back-to-back home runs — an MLB first.

3. When Prince Fielder announced his retirement in August, he had hit the same number of home runs (319) as his father Cecil.

2. At the end of action on June 6, Colorado's Cristhian Adams' season stats read 13-for-53 with one double, one triple and four runs scored — exactly the same as his final numbers in 2015.

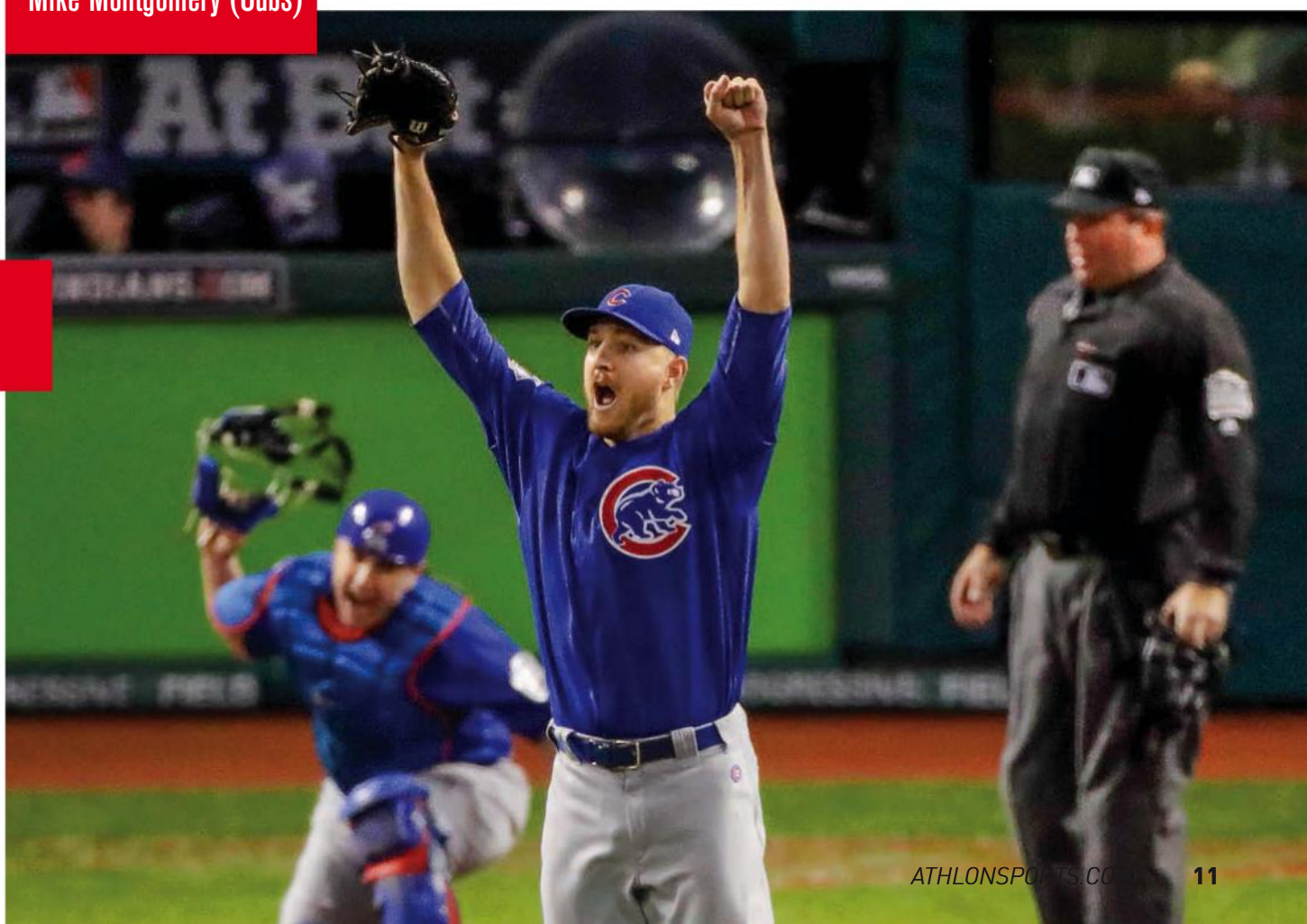
1. The two pitchers who recorded the final outs for their respective teams in the World Series — Mike Montgomery (Cubs) and Trevor Bauer (Indians) — were teammates in 2008 at Hart High School in Southern California.

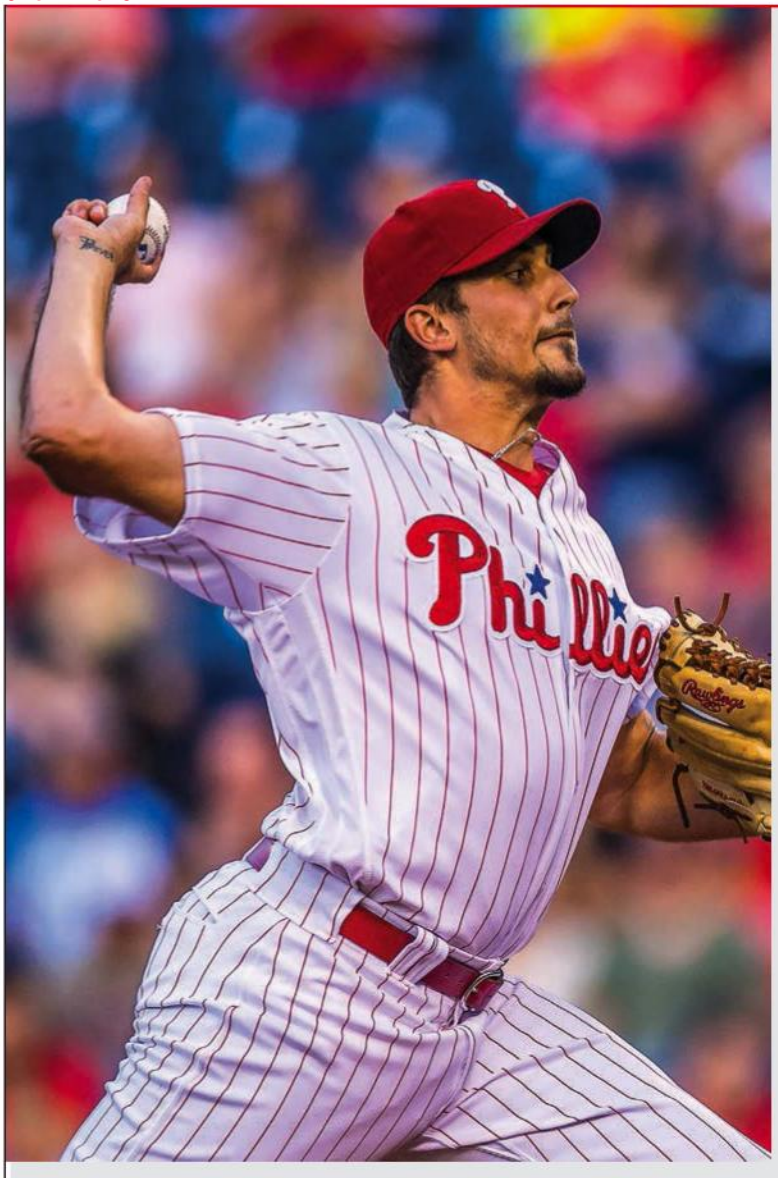
Bobby Wilson's Excellent, Circuitous Two-Year Adventure

Dec. 12, 2014: Claimed off waivers by Tampa Bay.
July 31, 2015: Claimed off waivers by the Rangers.
Nov. 5, 2015: Granted free agency by the Rangers.
Dec. 15, 2015: Re-signed by the Rangers.
March 29, 2016: Traded by the Rangers to the Tigers.
May 3, 2016: Traded by the Tigers back to the Rangers.
May 8, 2016: Hits the first grand slam of his eight-year career, a tiebreaking blow in the eighth inning to beat — who else? — the Tigers.
May 14, 2016: Connects for another grand slam.
Aug. 4, 2016: Waived by Texas and claimed by Tampa Bay.
Aug. 6, 2016: Homers in his second at-bat as a Ray.
Sept. 21, 2016: Hits his fourth homer in his 24th game with Tampa Bay, as many as he'd finished with in any of his previous seven full seasons.
Nov. 15, 2016: Elects free agency.

Harper: Tom DiPace; Others: AP Images

Trevor Bauer (Indians)
Mike Montgomery (Cubs)





ZACH ATTACKED, BUT BRUNO BOMBED

Zach Eflin's major-league debut was a disaster, but compared to Bruno Haas', it was a masterpiece.

The 22-year-old righthander — a fine prospect despite the outcome — tied a Phillies record for most earned runs allowed (eight) in a first start when he was blitzed by the Blue Jays last June. After striking out leadoff man Jose Bautista, Eflin saw everything unravel. He was subjected to six extra-base hits, including three by Josh Donaldson alone, and a host of other indignities. Unlike poor Haas, though, Eflin was relieved (in more ways than one) with two outs in the third inning.

Bruno's big-league bow was perhaps the most cataclysmic of all time. Pitching for the 1915 Philadelphia Athletics, he was abandoned by manager Connie Mack to face 53 Yankees batters. An all-time record 16 of them walked, 13 got hits and 15 scored. Pitch counts weren't a thing back then, but it's not hard to imagine that Haas had to be north of 200. The good news? All of the knocks were singles, and because the A's made seven errors, seven runs were unearned.

Things improved markedly for both pitchers after that.

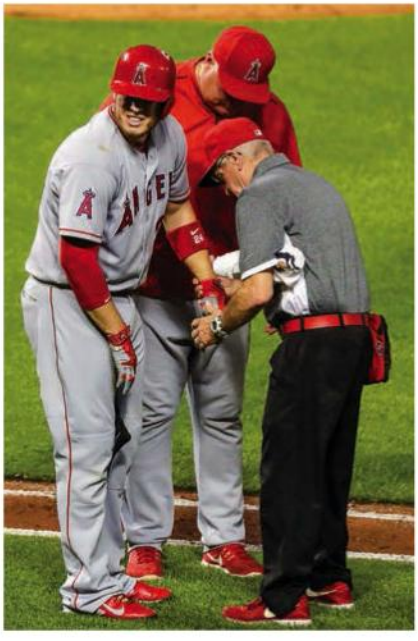
Eflin was just happy to be there, saying his first exposure to The Show was "awesome" and "I had the time of my life." He posted an ERA of 2.08 over his next seven starts, the last of which made him the first Phillies pitcher since Art Mahaffey in 1960 to throw a walk-free shutout as soon as his eighth major league outing.

Haas went on to a unique career, playing a little outfield in his only major-league season, moving to the NFL for a couple of years, forging a long tenure in the minors that didn't end until he was 55 years old, finally putting the uniform in mothballs to re-start the defunct Northern League, and then toiling as a manager and scout until his death in 1952.

D(L) DAY

There were two walk-off wins on July 8, 2016, but the real news concerned the raft of players who walked off the field in pain. All of these guys either were scratched after being hurt during pregame warmups or were forced to leave their games:

Noah Syndergaard — shoulder deadness
Yoenis Cespedes — strained quad
Brock Holt — sprained ankle
Hanley Ramirez — shin contusion
Brandon Phillips — fractured hand
Matt Holliday — sprained ankle
Michael Wacha — heel contusion
Gregory Polanco — hamstring
Byron Buxton — bruised knee
C.J. Cron — fractured hand
Mark Teixeira — knee pain
Trevor Rosenthal — hamstring
Carlos Rodon — sprained wrist
Craig Kimbrel — torn meniscus



A Buc for a Buck

It was $1 Coke night at PNC Park on Sept. 22. That, reportedly, was what the Pirates paid the Yankees to acquire veteran lefthander Phil Coke earlier in the day. He wound up costing them a quarter per inning (all of them scoreless), then was released a week after the season ended.

Off and On

Two notable, contrasting streaks ended on Independence Day last summer. The White Sox's previous 15 home runs had been hit with the bases empty until rookie Tim Anderson connected with one man aboard against the Yankees. (That tied a franchise record but was five shy of the 2011 Giants' major-league mark.) Meanwhile, Dodgers pitchers saw their binge of holding batters hitless in their last 43 official at-bats with someone on base end with J.J. Hardy's two-run double.

Eflin, Cron, Chris Davis: AP Images; Montero, Khris Davis: Tom DiPace

BEEN THERE, DONE THAT

Miguel Montero was at the top of his game for the Diamondbacks in the 2011 postseason, coming off an All-Star campaign and what were, at the time, career highs of 18 home runs and 86 RBIs. Batting cleanup in Game 3 of the NLDS, he doubled in a run in his first at-bat and singled home another in his second. So it wasn't surprising to see Brewers manager Ron Roenicke walk him on purpose with two outs and runners on second and third in the fifth inning to bring up Paul Goldschmidt, who was playing in his 51st major league game. The then-little-known first baseman foiled the strategy by becoming just the third rookie to hit a grand slam in the postseason.

Fast forward to Game 1 of the 2016 NLCS, with Montero on the Cubs bench. Although it was his walk-off homer that had clinched the division crown in September, the backup catcher's career was flagging to the tune of a .216 regular-season batting average. Eighth inning, 3–3 game, two away, runners on first and second and the pitcher due up. The Dodgers, presumably to get Aroldis Chapman out of the game by forcing the Cubs to pinch-hit, elected to buck convention and load the bases by intentionally walking the .188-hitting Chris Coghlan. L.A. manager Dave Roberts assumed correctly that Chicago skipper Joe Maddon would counter with the only left-handed hitter left on his bench — Montero.

The script had been flipped.

Montero quickly went to 0-2, then turned around a Joe Blanton slider for the first grand slam following an intentional walk in a playoff game since Goldschmidt's, and the first one ever by a pinch-hitter that put his team ahead.

The Cubs rode Miguel's retribution to the World Series, where he found himself in an eerily familiar position. With Game 7 tied in the 10th, Cleveland elected to walk Addison Russell on purpose to load the bases and face Montero — who poked a single into left to plate what proved to be the winning run.

IT WAS A GOOD DAY TO BE A DAVIS

There have been more than 60 men named Davis to have played major-league baseball. Last May 17, two of them did something that had been accomplished only once before by a player of any moniker.

In Oakland, **Khris Davis** joined Joey Votto (May 13, 2012) as the lone players ever to cap a three-homer game with a walk-off grand slam. And in Cleveland, Rajai Davis was the second 9-hole hitter (after George Uhle on June 1, 1923) to make five plate appearances, reach base in each, score four runs and drive in three.

...& So Was This

When the action of July 28 was completed, both Khris (aka "Khrush") and **Chris (aka "Crush") Davis** had hit exactly 45 home runs with 111 RBIs and 143 hits over the past calendar year.

THE CURIOUS CASE OF CHRIS YOUNG

Chris Young — most recently of the Royals — has always been a curiosity. He's a 6'10" Texan who went to Princeton, where he was the unanimous Ivy League Rookie of the Year in baseball and basketball. His coach called him "Greg Maddux in Randy Johnson's body." Young graduated in four years after writing a thesis entitled "The Impact of Jackie Robinson and the Integration of Baseball on Racial Stereotypes in America: A Quantitative Content Analysis of Stories about Race in the *New York Times*."

A survivor of three shoulder surgeries and an Albert Pujols missile to the mug, Young holds the major-league record for most times being removed from a no-hitter (five), and he's struck out more batters than any player whose last name begins with "Y" other than another Young — name of Cy. He's one of only three AL pitchers in the DH era to drive in three runs in a game, and he's the sole Mets moundsman to get two hits in one inning (both off Cole Hamels, no less). His wife's grandfather, Les Patrick, is the namesake of the NHL's old Patrick Division; he once made 23 road starts in a row without being beaten; he allowed the only inside-the-park home run in All-Star Game history; in the 2007 and 2009 seasons combined, base-stealers went 64-for-64 against him ... and on and on.

Young added to his idiosyncratic résumé last year by allowing 28 home runs (including at least one in each of his 13 starts) in a mere 88.2 innings. That, unsurprisingly, is the most ever served up in such little action. More extraordinary was that he surrendered 20 of them in one stretch of 35 innings, but adding to the level of quirk, 20 were with the bases empty. There was one piece of good news in his otherwise ghastly season stat line: his pace of 9.54 strikeouts per nine innings. Unfortunately, not even that comes without an ominous asterisk. It was the ninth-highest whiff rate ever recorded by a pitcher who gave up that many roundtrippers — but all eight ahead of him pitched more than 200 innings.

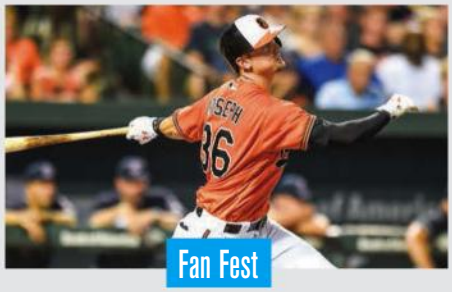
The Sultans of Strand

Chub Sullivan lived to be only 25. But he lives again in the person of **Caleb Joseph** (below).

Sullivan was a beanpole of a first baseman who last played for the Worcester Ruby Legs in 1880. By all accounts, he was an entertaining goofball of a guy and one of the first players to slide into bases. What he wasn't was a run-producer. The Boston native batted 170 times that season with nary an RBI. That was an especially clever trick considering he hit a respectable .259, collected six doubles and three triples, and struck out only six times. That spate of futility has persisted as the record for most plate appearances in a season without driving in a run. Sadly, Sullivan never had a chance at redemption, dying before he could play another game from what was officially called phthisis pulmonalis, now known as tuberculosis.

Twenty-four years after Sullivan's barren season, a Brooklyn Superbas pitcher named Oscar "Flip Flap" Jones established what is still the modern record of 150 ribbie-less trips. On the flip side, he also managed to lead the National League with 25 losses.

Those two ancient instances of quaint haplessness could be chalked up as dead-ball aberrations, but Joseph has no such excuse. In the 2016 campaign, 21,744 runners crossed the plate. None of them were driven in by the Orioles catcher, who came to the dish 141 times — a new live-ball era standard of strand. His inability to stumble into a ribbie was as bewildering as Sullivan's. Joseph, who had been reasonably productive in the past, batted 62 times with runners on base. He garnered a mere seven singles and a double in those opportunities and, in the 29 instances that teammates were in scoring position, neither of his two hits plated one.

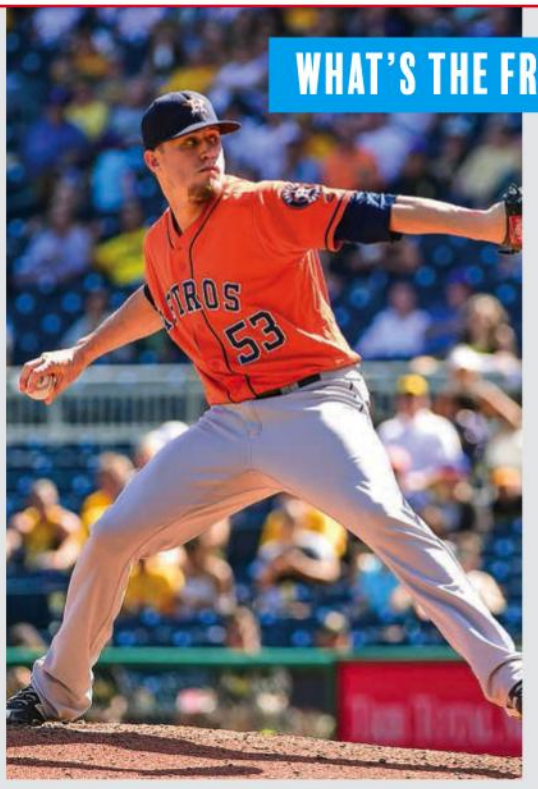


Fan Fest

Strikeouts have gone viral. The disease can be measured in many ways, most directly by the rate of 8.101 per nine innings in 2016, when a major-league record was set for the eighth year in a row. Did all of that swinging for the fences pay off? Maybe. Eight of the 13 teams that fanned at a rate below the league average also scored at a rate below the league average.

It certainly was worth it if you were batting against Michael Pineda or Robbie Ray. Pineda's 10.605 strikeouts per nine represented the highest rate among American League qualifiers, but his 4.82 ERA ranked 35th of the 39. Ray maintained the No. 2 punchout pace in the game at 11.254, yet his 4.85 ERA slotted 68th of 72.

Young, Rizzo: Tom DiPace; Others: AP Images



WHAT'S THE FREQUENCY, KENNETH?

A post-All-Star Game MLB-record 16.33 strikeouts per nine innings, to answer the question. **Ken Giles**, acquired by the Astros from the Phillies ostensibly to close games in 2016, was initially a colossal flop as his ERA stood north of 6.00 on June 1. He was better that month, then (discounting one implosion) virtually untouchable. Between July 6 and Aug. 7, he struck out 23 men in a nine-inning span. Twenty went down swinging.

The apex was Giles' six punchouts in 1.2 innings of work against Texas. The only two other pitchers in history to record more whiffs than outs in a stint of more than one inning had done so within eight days of each other in 1999 — Tim Wakefield and Steve Kline.

Adventures in Scorekeeping

Bad weather in 2016 "precipitated" two of the more peculiar statistical credits in recent memory. On July 21, Detroit's Shane Greene entered a game in the bottom of the sixth inning and escaped a bases-loaded jam to protect a 2–1 lead over the White Sox. After the Tigers went down 1-2-3 in the seventh, the contest was called due to rain without Chicago ever coming to bat. Thus, the righthander was awarded with a save despite not being on the mound for the final out. Then, because the rain-soaked Pirates-Cubs game of Sept. 29 was ruled a tie after five frames, Pittsburgh starter Ivan Nova was ascribed a complete game in a no-decision. The last time that happened was in 2003, when Pat Hentgen and Mike Mussina both got one as the Orioles and Yankees played to a draw.

To Score, or Not to Score

The 2016 Padres were the first team not to score in their first 30 innings of a season. Coors Field provided the antidote, and in their next 15 frames, they tallied 29 times. Through April 25, they were averaging 2.6 runs in games not played in Colorado, where their norm was 10.7. For the season, San Diego was shut out an MLB-high 15 times, yet topped the NL with seven eruptions of 13 or more runs.

Out of Left Field

Maybe it was an omen when, last June 28, Joe Maddon stationed three different relief pitchers in left field during the final two frames of a 15-inning defeat of Cincinnati. Out of position players, the Cubs skipper dipped into his bag of unorthodoxy to wheedle the pitching matchups he wanted, alternating Travis Wood and Spencer Patton between left and the mound, closing out the game with Wood pitching and Pedro Strop afield.

No one asked if Maddon was aware that back in 1908, the last time the Cubs had won a World Series, there was a mental institution located behind the left field wall of their park, West Side Grounds. Patients could often be heard screaming at fans and players. Some cite this as the origin of the "out of left field" expression in common lexicon today.

The ghost of the crazy-like-a-fox Maddon even seemed to waft through his old Tropicana Field stomping grounds in August, when the Rays deployed three left fielders in the first five innings against Texas.

TALKING POINTS

"When he says [he has] a surprise, you think elephant, giraffe, you don't know."
— Anthony Rizzo on a text he got from manager Joe Maddon regarding the re-signing of Dexter Fowler

"You have to be an idiot to test positive."
— Marlon Byrd, who last season was suspended for banned substances for a second time, in 2013

"I felt like I got a really good read off the bat. I don't know if it was the sound or whatever, I just got a bad read." — Center fielder "Contradictory Chris" Owings on misplaying a fly ball into a double

"I've seen the movie Moneyball. *That's about it."* — First-round pick A.J. Puk on what he knows about the A's, the team that drafted him

"It looks like the pre-steroid-era bobblehead." — Jose Canseco on his bobblehead day at Oakland Coliseum

"'I thought we were getting a guy who threw 105. We only got 103."
— Jason Hammel after Aroldis Chapman's first appearance with the Cubs

"I don't think the trainers have my size."
— Juan Uribe, sidelined by a testicular contusion in June, on why he doesn't wear a cup

*"Baseball is a f*****-up game."*
— Trevor Bauer on his six-run pounding despite feeling he threw well

"While my efforts to eliminate pitchers from having to throw to 1B didnt (sic) pass, I'm proud of the PA & Owners for coming together on the new CBA."
— A tweet by Jon Lester after MLB and the MLB Players Association agreed on a new CBA

Calendar of the WEIRD

APRIL

April 11 – Two guys who had never before played in the majors — Trevor Story and Tyler White — are the season's first Players of the Week in their respective leagues.
April 16 – For the second straight night, the Yankees go 0-for-12 with runners in scoring position against Seattle.
April 17 – A pair of Mets relievers — Jerry Blevins and Addison Reed — are credited with two strikeouts apiece in the ninth inning.
April 20 – For the first time this season, in their 16th game, the Phillies reach double digits in hits — notching their 10th on a walk-off infield single in the 11th inning.
April 21 – Chasen Shreve is the first pitcher in a decade to allow a home run on each of the first two pitches he throws in a game.
April 22 – Wil Myers' season-opening strikeout streak reaches 16 games.
April 26 – The Braves fail to go deep for a 15th straight game — ultimately more than double the length of any other team's streak in 2016.

MAY

May 5 – Six days after allowing a 12-run inning to the Mets, Giants hurlers are stung for a 13-run frame by the Rockies.
May 6 – Reds relievers snap their stretch of being scored upon in 23 consecutive games in which one has appeared, setting a record for a single season.
May 8 – With Bryce Harper, who was batting in front of him, being walked six times and getting hit by a pitch, Ryan Zimmerman leaves a record 14 men on base and makes the final out of four innings in Washington's loss to the Cubs.
May 9 – J.T. Realmuto is the first player in 10 years to lose a home run for passing a teammate on the basepaths.
May 13 – The Phillies execute three bunt singles and a go-ahead suicide squeeze by pitcher Jeremy Hellickson in a 3–2 defeat of the Reds.
May 14 – Thirty-five games into the season, the Braves become the last team to hit a triple and are still hunting for their 10th home run when everyone else has at least 29.
May 16 – Jordan Zimmermann is the first pitcher since Lefty Grove faced Babe Ruth's 1927 Yankees to win a game in which he permits at least eight runs and strikes out nine or more batters.
May 18 – A 15th consecutive Phillies victory is by three or fewer runs.
May 23 – The A's, after a franchise-record 83 games dating to 2015 without one, are the last team of the year to coax a seven-inning start from a pitcher.
May 19 – Erick Aybar misses a game after having a chicken bone removed from his throat.
May 22 – Giancarlo Stanton whiffs for the 17th time (tying a record for a six-game span) in his last 20 at-bats.
May 23 – Gio Gonzalez's longest-active streak of starts without allowing multiple homers (44) goes by the wayside when he serves up a second to the Mets — then a third two pitches later.
May 25 – The Twins, 46 games into their season, finally have a two-win starter (Tyler Duffey).
May 27 – The Elias Sports Bureau informs that, for the first time in 51 seasons, a player (Josh Donaldson) drives in a go-ahead run in four plate appearances in one game.
May 30 – The Cubs bullpen provides seven perfect innings — the most in a game since 1917, when Red Sox starting pitcher Babe Ruth was ejected and Ernie Shore completed a no-hitter.

JUNE

June 1 – The Mets plate only one of their 20 baserunners and lose, 2–1, when rotund reliever Matt Albers doubles for the first hit by a White Sox pitcher in 11 years then scores the winning run.
June 1 – Exactly one-third of the way into their season, the Cardinals whack their 10th pinch-hit home run, matching their total in the previous four years combined.
June 4 – **Carlos Correa** logs his third game-winning hit in the 12th inning or later in the past 12 days.
June 4 – Jeff Samardzija serves up four gopher balls (plus a single and a double) in a span of 28 pitches.
June 9 – A Prince Fielder home run ball blows up the cell phone of a fan who had held it up to protect herself from the oncoming missile.
June 13 – James Shields is the first pitcher since 1894 to allow at least seven runs prior to the fourth inning in three consecutive starts.
June 15 – The Mariners lose for the 17th time in their last 19 games of 13 or more innings.
June 19 – The Padres win for the first time in 11 tries on a Sunday.
June 20 – The Rockies and Marlins set a record by launching eight solo homers to account for every run of a game.
June 21 – After being defeated in their previous seven games while scoring a total of 12 runs, the Phillies lose despite tallying 10 times.
June 22 – Washington's Michael A. Taylor strikes out five times, then commits a three-base error that allows the game-tying and -ending runs to score.
June 25 – The White Sox, joining the 1995 and 2004 Tigers, become the second franchise to lose a tilt in which it hits seven home runs.
June 28 – Though he's pitched fewer than 250 innings, J.J. Hoover sets a Reds record by allowing the sixth grand slam of his career.

JULY

July 1 – For the second time in a week, Bryce Harper forfeits an extra base because he lollygags at the plate watching a drive he thought was going farther.
July 2 – Jose Fernandez's nine runs allowed are more than he'd surrendered in his previ-

AP Images

ous nine starts combined.
July 6 – Thanks to Chase Utley (on the heels of C.J. Cron and Wilmer Flores), it is the first time in history that three players have six-hit games in a five-day period.
July 8 – The White Sox, in their 86th game, turn their third triple play of the season.
July 10 – The A's begin a game having played a franchise-record 15 straight errorless games, then make four (including a game-ender) in a 2–1 loss to the Astros.
July 12 – In an All-Star Game managed by Terry Collins of the Mets, none of the four players on his own team appear.
July 17 – The lone run of a game scores on a passed ball for the first time since 1986, as the Reds edge the Brewers.
July 17 – Farm clubs Bluefield and Greeneville combine for 56 strikeouts in a 20-inning game.
July 19 – The Yankees fail to score in the first inning for a 23rd straight contest.
July 23 – Red Sox TV analyst Jerry Remy is knocked out of a game when a TV monitor in the broadcast booth falls on his head.
July 24 – Tyler Chatwood is first NL pitcher known to have won a game in which he pitched as few as five innings, did not allow a run and issued at least eight walks.
July 27 – Outfielder Kirk Nieuwenhuis commits what will be his only three errors of the season (201 chances) in the span of two innings.
July 28 – Jeurys Familia blows his second save in less than 24 hours after converting 52 in a row over the previous 360 days.
July 30 – Jameson Taillon is deprived of his first major-league hit when, after lining an apparent single, he is thrown out at first by the right fielder.
Aug. 3 – Thanks in part to a three-run homer from **Kevin Kiermaier**, the Rays are the first AL team to be 20 or more games under .500 and score 12 runs in a shutout of the defending champs (Royals).

AUGUST

Aug. 11 – Oakland starts a different pitcher for an eighth consecutive game — the first time in 55 years a team has done that.
Aug. 13 – Brandon McCarthy, after walking three or fewer batters in 122 consecutive starts, issues five for the third outing in a row.
Aug. 19 – A ninth different batter (Ehire Adrianza) notches the game-winning RBI in the last nine supplied by Giants pinch-hitters.
Aug. 23 – Danny Salazar has lasted a total of 11 innings over his last four starts.
Aug. 28 – Kevin Gausman wins for the first time in 26 road starts.

Aug. 31 – In a major-league first, rookies on opposing teams hit grand slams, as Stephen Cardullo and **Andrew Toles** connect.

SEPTEMBER

Sept. 2 – For the second time in three months, the Mariners cobble together a nine-run inning without the benefit of an extra-base hit.
Sept. 2-4 – The Red Sox tie a post-1900 record by scoring at least 12 runs against the same foe (A's) in a fourth straight meeting ... then tally 11 ... then are shut out.
Sept. 5 – Chad Bettis and Ubaldo Jimenez, who enter the day with a combined 5.70 ERA in 52 appearances and no complete games in their last 214 starts, both throw two-hitters.
Sept. 12 – The White Sox score in all eight innings against Cleveland, and the Red Sox tally in their first seven versus Baltimore.
Sept. 14 – The Diamondbacks are the first team in 86 years to hang a double-digit hit total on a team (Rockies) in 14 consecutive games of one season.
Sept. 14 – Five teams with winning records are shut out on the same day for only the second time ever.
Sept. 25 – The Mets bat 11 times (including four by Jose Reyes) with the bases loaded in a 17–0 destruction of the Phillies.
Sept. 28 – The Twins put up a crooked number after 106 consecutive innings of scoring zero or one run — the longest streak in 74 years.

OCTOBER & NOVEMBER

Oct. 2 – The Angels conclude their season as the first AL team in more a century without an extra-inning win.
Oct. 7 – Elias notes that, for the fourth time in five years, a left-handed batter who didn't homer against a southpaw in the regular season did so in the postseason.
Oct. 19 – The Indians clinch the ALCS despite everyone other than Francisco Lindor batting .138.
Oct. 25 – Roberto Perez, who hit three home runs in 153 regular-season at-bats, goes deep for the third time in his 27th trip of the postseason.
Nov. 2 – Three different Cubs catchers drive in a run as the Cubs win Game 7 of the World Series.

There's a first time for... EVERYTHING

BY: BRUCE HERMAN

2016 was the first time that...

A TEAM

» Won an Opening Day shutout by a margin of as many as 15 runs *(Dodgers)*.

» Was victorious on Opening Day despite getting just one hit *(Rangers)*.

» Was shut out in its first three games of a season and/or in five of the first 10 *(Padres)*.

» Had more strikeouts than hits in each of its first nine games of a season *(Twins)*.

» Hit three pinch-hit home runs in one game *(Cardinals)*.

» Won four consecutive contests after losing its first nine of a season *(Braves, Twins)*.

» Had two starters with three or more wins and a sub-1.00 ERA 20 games into a season *(Cubs, Jake Arrieta and Jason Hammel)*.

» Used three pitchers who failed to record an out, yet finished with a shutout *(Marlins)*.

» Lost a home game despite erasing deficits in the seventh, eighth and ninth innings *(Pirates)*.

» Was saddled with a bullpen that allowed a run in 23 consecutive games *(Reds)*.

» Got home runs from its first two batters of a game, both of whom were 22 or younger *(Rangers, Rougned Odor and Nomar Mazara)*.

» Had four players simultaneously carrying 12-game hitting streaks in home games *(Red Sox)*.

» Got a home run from two Canadian-born players in the same game *(Blue Jays, Michael Saunders and Russell Martin)*.

MIGUEL CABRERA

» Gleaned 52 strikeouts from its pitchers in a three-game series *(Astros vs. Orioles)*.

» Compiled a slugging percentage as high as 1.2051 in a game *(Rockies)*.

» Received multiple-home run performances from four different players in four successive games *(Mariners)*.

» Lost a game despite hitting six more homers than its opponent *(White Sox vs. Blue Jays)*.

» Assembled a streak of 41 strikeouts between walks from its bullpen *(Yankees)*.

» Turned a 3-3-5 triple play *(Nationals)*.

» Got a home run from all four infielders and an assist from all three outfielders in the same game *(Indians)*.

» Struck out 61 opposition batters in a four-game series *(Astros vs. Blue Jays)*.

» Allowed exactly one run, each via a solo homer, in four consecutive contests *(Royals)*.

» Hit four home runs in a game before making an out *(Orioles, who lost anyway)*.

» Collected 17 pinch-hit homers *(Cardinals)*.

» Put 28 players on the disabled list *(Dodgers — including Andre Ethier, who broke his leg during spring training)*.

» Won 76.6 percent of its one-run games *(Rangers)*.

» Connected on multiple longballs in the first inning of three straight games *(Angels)*.

» Allowed 103 home runs by its relievers and/or 258 by its entire staff *(Reds)*.

» Utilized nine pitchers in a shutout of nine or more innings *(Indians)*.

» Won a game in which it overcame multiple two-run deficits with home runs in the ninth inning and later *(Mets over Phillies)*.

» Struck out 1,543 times in one season *(Brewers)*.

» Prevailed in 10 straight win-or-go-home postseason games *(Giants)*.

» Received its first complete game of the year in a postseason contest *(Blue Jays, Marco Estrada)*.

» Threw five shutouts in a single postseason *(Indians)*.

A BATTER

» Hit 42 home runs for a 100-loss team *(Brian Dozier)*.

» Who won the batting title the previous year ripped three extra-base hits in his first game of the next *(Dee Gordon)*.

» Produced a multi-homer game in each of his first 14 seasons in the majors *(Miguel Cabrera)*.

» Hit three home runs in a game, one of which was a grand slam in extra innings *(Aaron Hill)*.

» Was walked six times and hit by a pitch in

Cabrera: Tom DiPace; Others: AP Images

the same contest *(Bryce Harper)*.

» Hitting out of the 9-hole drove in at least six runs in a game for a second time in his career *(Jackie Bradley Jr.)*.

» Homered in each of the first two innings of back-to-back tilts *(Mookie Betts)*.

» With an average below .050 (min. 25 ABs) homered for the sole run of a game *(Erik Kratz)*.

» Tripled and hit a grand slam in the first inning of a game *(George Springer)*.

» Recorded his first 18 home runs of a season in games in which he which he also struck out *(Chris Carter)*.

» Went deep three times and doubled twice in one game *(Kris Bryant)*.

» Reached on catcher's interference 12 times in a season *(Jacoby Ellsbury)*.

» Batted above .450 with a minimum of 50 at-bats prior to an All-Star Game *(Sandy Leon)*.

» Aged 40 or older batted cleanup in an All-Star Game *(David Ortiz)*.

» Hit safely in each of his first five All-Star Games *(Mike Trout)*.

» Homered off a 16th different Cy Young Award winner *(David Ortiz)*.

» Struck out 221 times in his first 150 major league games *(Miguel Sano)*.

» Fanned four times in a game as both a teenager and a 40-year-old *(Alex Rodriguez)*.

» Did not draw a walk until the 282nd plate appearance of his career *(Bartolo Colon)*.

» Went 5-for-5 or better five times in a two-year span *(Yunel Escobar)*.

» Homered multiple times in a 5-for-5 performance more than once in a season *(Kris Bryant)*.

» Racked up more than 30 hits, with at least 10 of them leaving the yard, in the first 22 games he played in a season *(Gary Sanchez)*.

» Hit a 134th first-inning home run in a career *(Albert Pujols)*.

» Drew 21 walks as a pinch-hitter *(Matt Joyce)*.

» Passed 400 career home runs before hitting his first regular-season walk-off *(Mark Teixeira)*.

» Was batting below .200 for his career at the time he hit his 50th home run *(Mike Zunino)*.

» Struck out 174 times in a 50-stolen base season *(Jonathan Villar)*.

» Amassed as many as 216 hits in a 20-homer/30-stolen base campaign *(Jose Altuve)*.

» Went deep twice hitting out of the 9-hole in a World Series game *(Roberto Perez)*.

» Homered to lead off a World Series Game 7 *(Dexter Fowler)*.

A PITCHER

» Won a third consecutive Opening Day start for a third different team *(David Price)*.

» Pitched a postseason game for a different team in four consecutive seasons *(David Price)*.

» Was removed with a no-hitter as late as the eighth inning only to see a reliever ruin the no-no *(Ross Stripling)*.

» Made two scoreless starts of at least six innings and also won two games in relief, all in April *(Logan Verrett)*.

» Was removed from a no-hitter as late as 23 outs into a game *(Adam Conley)*.

» Lost five decisions out of the bullpen in April *(Brett Cecil)*.

» Struck out at least 10 batters while issuing no more than one walk in six straight starts *(Clayton Kershaw)*.

» With an ERA of 8.00-plus after a minimum of five starts allowed no runs and struck out 12 or more batters in his next one *(Matt Shoemaker)*.

» Threw at least six scoreless innings and allowed three or fewer hits in four straight starts of the same season *(Michael Fulmer)*.

» Pitched six or more innings and allowed fewer than six hits in 12 consecutive games *(Marco Estrada)*.

» Allowed 12 runs in a modern-era start in which he failed to record four outs *(Edinson Volquez)*.

» Gave up only one hit in a start of at least five innings with that hit being a grand slam *(Kyle Hendricks)*.

» Made 43 straight appearances without surrendering an earned run *(Zach Britton)*.

» Saved 56 games prior to his 22nd birthday *(Roberto Osuna)*.

» Walked five or more batters in three consecutive appearances of less than four innings *(Brandon McCarthy)*.

» Roped the first nine hits of his season for extra bases *(Adam Wainwright)*.

» Had issued only nine walks at the time of his 150th strikeout *(Clayton Kershaw)*.

» Retired the first 21 batters of a game, then was yanked *(Rich Hill)*.

» Saved at least 30 games for one team and 15 for another in the same campaign *(Mark Melancon)*.

COREY KLUBER

TREVOR STORY

» Struck out eight batters in the first three innings of a postseason game *(Corey Kluber)*.

A ROOKIE

» Homered in each of his first three MLB games *(Trevor Story)*.

» Hit 10 longballs in the month of his big-league debut *(Trevor Story)*.

» Homered three times in a game while playing shortstop *(Corey Seager)*.

» Produced an ERA below 0.95 in any 10-start stretch of his debut season *(Michael Fulmer)*.

» Homered in his first MLB at-bat immediately following a teammate who did the same *(Aaron Judge, after Tyler Austin)*.

» Included 38 extra-base hits among his first 50 knocks in the majors *(Ryan Schimpf)*.

17 THINGS TO WATCH IN 2017

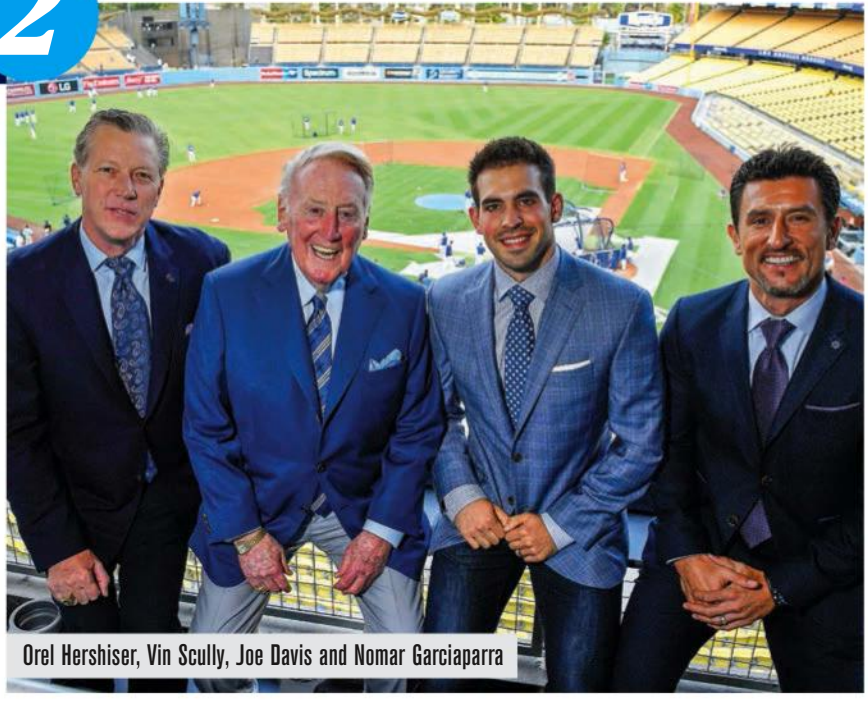
BY TYLER KEPNER

1 Start of a Cubs dynasty?

For a team that waited 108 years between championships, the Cubs' triumph in the 2016 World Series seemed as much like a beginning as an end. Yes, they concluded a monumental quest. But did they also begin a dynasty? It's not a crazy question. The Cubs' dazzling young infielders — Anthony Rizzo, Javier Baez, Addison Russell and Kris Bryant — are all under club control through 2021. Theo Epstein proved in Boston that he could build an elite player-development system, and he's done so again in Chicago. A trove of prospects, plus ample funding from owner Tom Ricketts and an extremely savvy baseball operations department, should make the rest of the league fear a long run of Cubs success. Whether that translates to a dynasty can only be determined in October, baseball's most unpredictable month. But these Cubs overcame several tense moments in their run to the title last fall, strengthening their mettle for future pursuits. And there's every reason to think this group will have many more chances to add to its trophy case.

2 Pulling up a *new* chair

A generation ago, it seemed like a big deal when Jay Leno replaced Johnny Carson as host of "The Tonight Show." Now, another transition behind an L.A. microphone will make that seem trivial. For the first time since 1949, the Dodgers will open a season without Vin Scully on their broadcast team. Scully, 89, is retired now, and Joe Davis, 29, will be his primary replacement. Davis called 50 road games for the Dodgers' cable network last season and now inherits the full-time gig. Scully worked without an analyst, but Davis will work alongside Orel Hershiser or Nomar Garciaparra. A native of Michigan, Davis has called baseball, college football and basketball for Fox and was once the voice of the Class AA Montgomery Biscuits. Now he's replacing The Voice, and Hershiser thinks he's up to it. "It's ridiculous how confident he is, how prepared he is, how much passion he has for the job," Hershiser told the Associated Press. "That's going to serve him really well."



Orel Hershiser, Vin Scully, Joe Davis and Nomar Garciaparra

Carter: Tom DiPace; Others: AP Images

NL Home Run Leader Chris Carter

3

POWERBALL

For casual observers, the 2016 home run explosion might have seemed subtle. No individual came close to reaching the absurd heights of the steroid era. Yet while nobody hit 50 home runs, everybody seemed to hit 30. Just one season in history featured more home runs: the 2000 season, with 5,693. The 2016 total was close behind, at 5,610. Overall, players hit 701 more homers than they did in 2015 and 1,424 more than they did in 2014. Commissioner Rob Manfred insists the ball has not been altered, and baseball's steroid-testing program has been praised as the toughest in sports, with players scheduled to be tested even more frequently in 2017. So what's the cause: lacquered bats, hitters with leg kicks, pitchers relying too much on fastballs over secondary stuff? We'll keep a close eye on the home run trend in 2017. If there's another upward spike, suspicions about juice — in the ball or in the players — will grow stronger.

4

Preller's punishment?

Fans of the stumbling Padres must have wondered what might have been as they watched the last World Series. The Indians' ace, Corey Kluber, and the Cubs' slugging first baseman, Anthony Rizzo, were both traded by the Padres before they could prove themselves in the majors. General manager **A.J. Preller** didn't make those deals, but his aggressive moves upon arriving in San Diego failed to shake the team from its slumber. Preller has reversed course and tried to restock the Padres' farm system, but in doing so, he instructed trainers to keep two files on players' medical records: one to be shared with rivals, one to be kept private. When the scam became public, specifically stemming from last summer's trade of Drew Pomeranz to Boston, the commissioner's office suspended Preller for 30 days. More significant than that lenient sentence could be the loss of trust from rival executives. If the Padres struggle again and Preller tries to peddle his players, will other teams be too skeptical to make strong offers? Most trades are motivated by desperation, so the guess here is that Preller will still command solid returns. But his deception will surely give teams pause, creating another obstacle to improvement for the Padres.

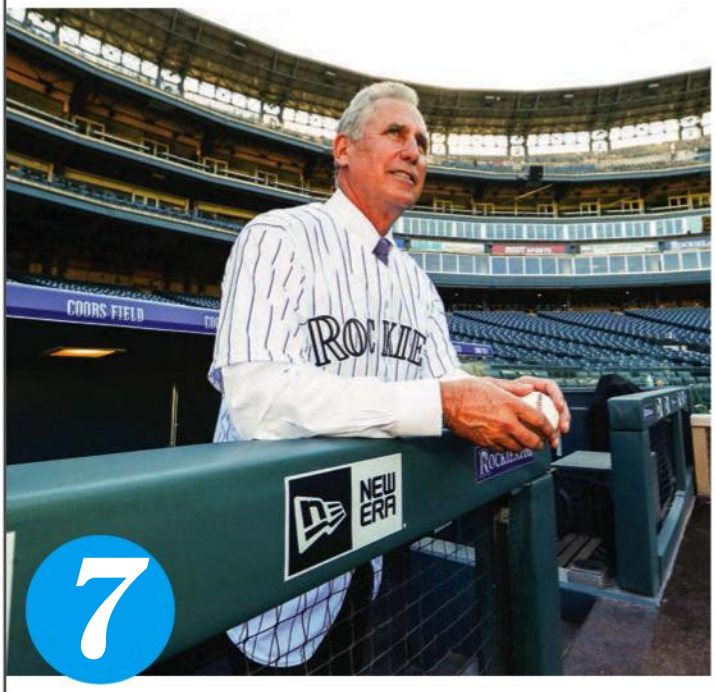
5

This time, it doesn't count

For 14 seasons, baseball allowed home-field advantage for the World Series to be determined by the winning league in the All-Star Game. By linking the two, MLB hoped to improve All-Star TV ratings while producing more inspired competition. The first goal didn't happen. As for the second, it was hard to tell. Some of the All-Star Games were thrillers, but mostly, nothing changed — managers still tried to use as many players as possible, and players just tried to have fun. Under the new collective bargaining agreement, the All-Star Game will return to being a pure exhibition, with home-field advantage going to the World Series team with the better record. It will be a shame if players abuse the event on July 11 by grooving pitches or failing to run hard on the bases. The guess here is we won't tell the difference, and can go back to celebrating the best in baseball without fretting over what it will mean in October.

6 Championship for Sale?

In the last five seasons, just one major-league pitcher has a lower earned run average than Chris Sale's 3.04, with more strikeouts than his 1,133: Clayton Kershaw. The difference is that Kershaw led the Dodgers to four division titles in that stretch, while Sale has never pitched in the playoffs. Expect that to change now that Sale works for the Red Sox, who acquired him from the White Sox in a December trade. The Red Sox didn't really need Sale, but they had the prospects to get him and could easily afford the three years and $39.5 million left on his contract (including option years). So they parted with Yoan Moncada and three others to give themselves a trio of aces, with Sale, David Price and Rick Porcello. Expectations are always high in Boston, and Sale — a famously intense competitor — will have to get used to the glare. But replacing an elite run producer (the retired David Ortiz) with an elite run preventer could be a stroke of genius for the Red Sox as they seek their fourth championship in 14 seasons.



7 A pitcher will lead them

The Rockies suffered their sixth losing season in a row in 2016, but they had their best record (75–87) and highest NL West finish (third place) within that span. Their offense was typically fearsome, with batting champ DJ LeMahieu (.348) and a lineup of prime-age sluggers leading the NL with 5.22 runs per game. Their pitching, while posting a 4.91 ERA, also appears to finally have some answers. Jon Gray, Tyler Chatwood, Chad Bettis, Tyler Anderson and Jeff Hoffman are all 27 or younger, and each had an ERA+ of better than 100 while combining for a winning record. Now, they'll have one of baseball's best pitching minds leading the dugout in manager **Bud Black**. The Rockies have had six other managers in their 24-year history, but Black is the first former pitcher. "I think that will be huge," star third baseman Nolan Arenado told the *Denver Post*, and Black sounded just as enthusiastic. "I see the game through the pitchers' eyes," he said. "The information I've gathered is we have some talented pitchers. I'm just a piece of the puzzle to help these guys along." The Rockies hope Black is the piece they've been missing as they try to wedge themselves into the annual fight between the Dodgers and the Giants for NL West supremacy.

8 Reversing the Texas curse

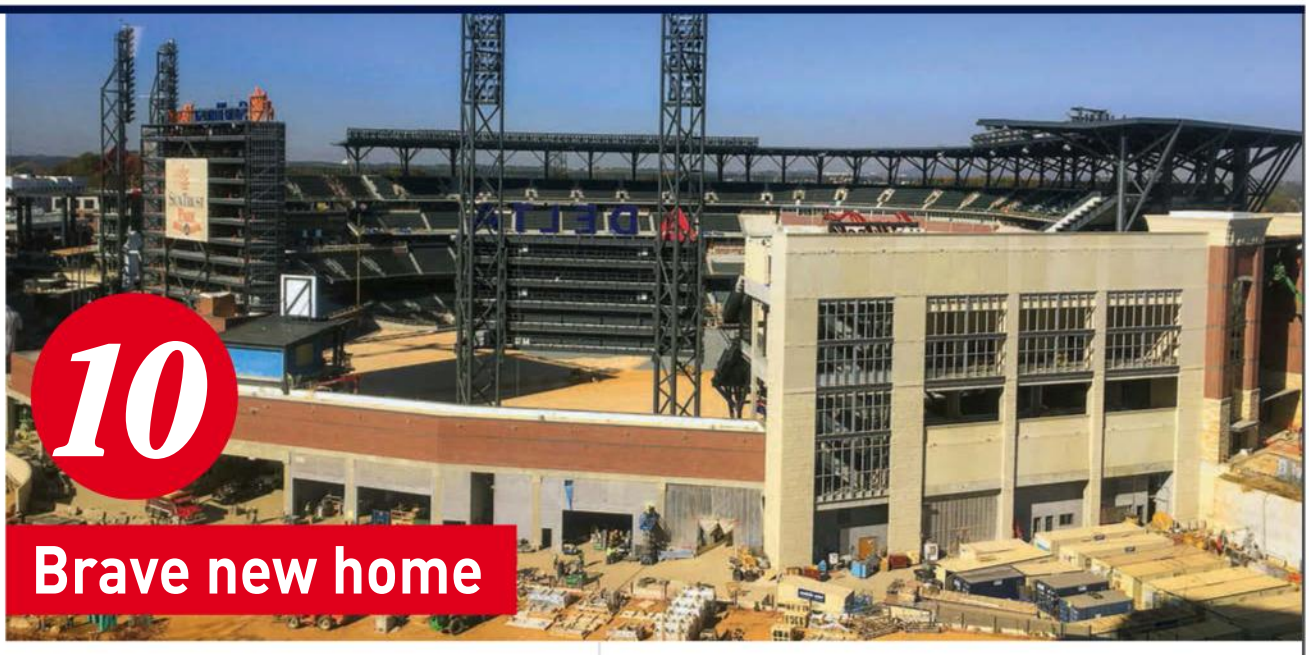
We've now had a century's worth of baseball in the Lone Star State — between the Astros (first known as the Colt .45s in 1962) and the Rangers (who moved from Washington in 1972) — with exactly zero championships.

It's not the kind of drought to inspire poetry, cinema and song; there's no Bambino or Billy Goat to blame for a curse. But it is striking to think of two franchises, neither in a small market, both located in a state with such a vibrant amateur scene, having such a history of futility. Now, though, the Rangers and the Astros sit squarely in a championship window. Though they were swept by Toronto in the division series, the Rangers had the best record in the American League last year and have reached the playoffs in five of the last seven seasons. The Astros fell just short of the postseason last year, but they made it in 2015 and added veteran stabilizers Carlos Beltran, Brian McCann and Josh Reddick to an impressive young core of Carlos Correa, Alex Bregman, Lance McCullers and more. Yes, one of these years, possibly soon, there will be a championship parade in Texas. Let's just hope it doesn't conflict with a high school football game.

9 End of the *Royal run?*

The Royals have made the most of their competitive window, winning two AL pennants and the 2015 World Series for their first title in three decades. But after they slipped to .500 last season, it's reasonable to wonder how much longer the team can stay a contender. The Royals have Sal Perez and Alex Gordon signed to long-term deals, but after this season, all of the following players can be free agents: Lorenzo Cain, Danny Duffy, Alcides Escobar, Eric Hosmer, Mike Moustakas and Jason Vargas. That's the guts of a championship roster, and if the Royals start slowly, you have to wonder if GM Dayton Moore will sell off those stars and start re-shaping the team with an eye on the long term. He'll have plenty of interested trade partners if he does.

AP Images



10 Brave new home

When the Braves moved to Turner Field in 1997, they had won four of the last five NL pennants and seemed destined to return regularly to the World Series. Yet they never won a World Series game in 20 seasons at The Ted, and now they're off to a new home, SunTrust Park, in suburban Cobb County. The Braves arrive in the midst of a vast rebuilding effort, but they've assembled a nice collection of young prospects who should help the team compete again soon. While fans wait for that, they'll enjoy what the team calls "the perfect marriage of classic ballpark feel, modern amenities and southern hospitality." The team, which had played only downtown since moving from Milwaukee in 1966, believes it will be closer to its fan base now, with the ballpark as the hub of a mixed-use development plaza featuring dining, shopping, residential and work areas, and year-round entertainment. With 188 losses the last two years, there hasn't been much entertainment on the field. But the Braves are making progress, and their new venue should give them more financial muscle when the time is right.

11 The (WBC) Hangover

Players get hurt every spring training, no matter where they are working out. But the prevailing thought is that players who take part in the World Baseball Classic put themselves at greater risk. For one thing, they're breaking from their established routines and leaving the cocoon of team supervision. They're also, perhaps, trying to do too much too soon in the games. The last time the event was held — in 2013, when the Dominican Republic won — the USA had so much trouble recruiting starting pitchers that the only ones on the roster were Gio Gonzalez, Derek Holland, Ryan Vogelsong, Ross Detwiler and knuckleballer R.A. Dickey. This year, Max Scherzer and Chris Archer have agreed to take part, but Noah Syndergaard backed out, noting his responsibility to the Mets and citing the injuries that ravaged their rotation last season. Others — and not just Americans — will surely follow Syndergaard, leaving the event to be a fun but muted competition, and holding the health of the participants up to scrutiny as the actual regular season wears on.

The Marlins move on

It was all set up for 2017 to be a memorable year for the Miami Marlins, who host the All-Star Game this summer at their gleaming postmodern ballpark. The Home Run Derby will feature Giancarlo Stanton, trying to defend his title. And the game should have been a showcase for Jose Fernandez, one of baseball's most electrifying young players, who very well could have been the NL's starting pitcher. Horrifically, Fernandez was killed with two friends last Sept. 25 in a boating crash in Miami. The immediate aftermath was devastating for the Marlins, who all wore Fernandez's No. 16 in an emotional victory over the Mets the next day. Owner Jeffrey Loria vowed that no other player would ever wear the number, and there was lots of talk about how to honor the memory of a player who brought such verve and passion to the game. During the World Series, news came down that nobody wanted to hear: Fernandez was drunk at the time of the crash, with cocaine also in his system. Will those revelations impact the way the Marlins honor their franchise icon? And how will the Marlins move on without their ace? The human toll of the tragedy will resonate deepest, of course. But the Marlins have the longest playoff drought of any NL team (their last appearance was 2003), and the task of returning is a whole lot tougher now.

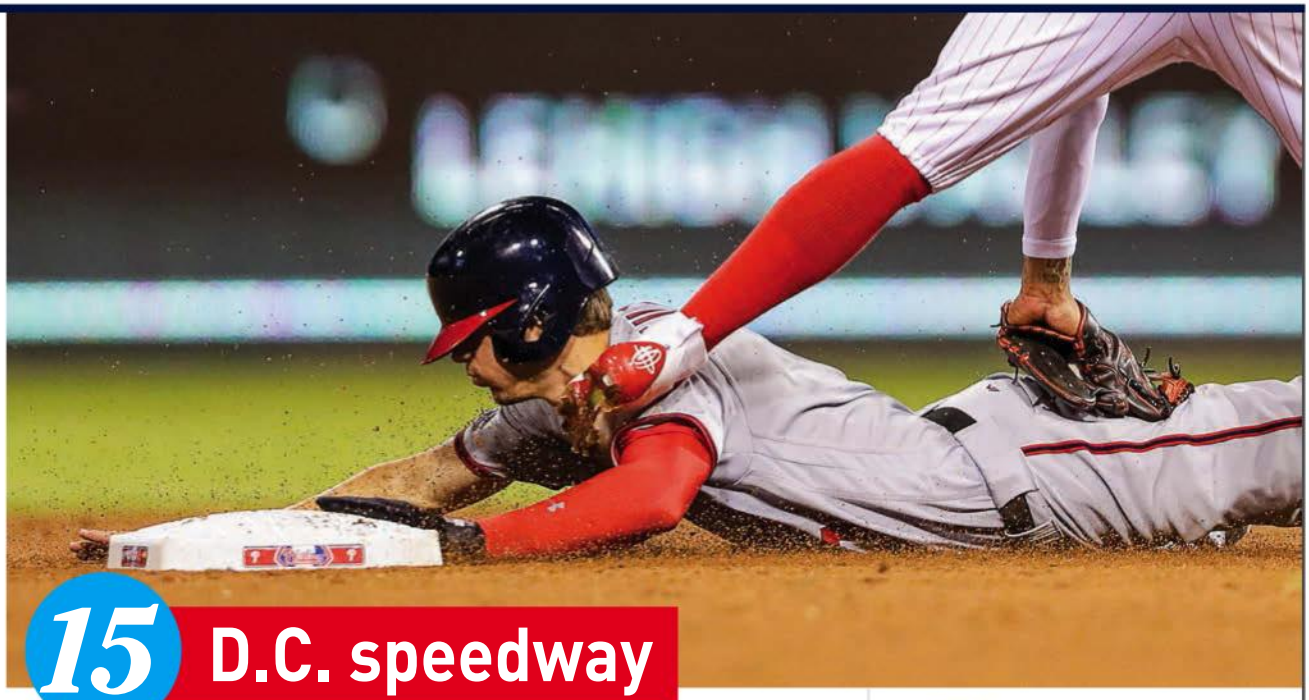
13 Sonny with a chance of *moving*

It's a fact of the baseball life: When a young player rises to stardom with the Athletics, he inevitably prices himself out of Oakland's range, making it only a matter of time until the A's trade him. Considering the weak class of free-agent starters over the winter, Sonny Gray should have been a prime trade candidate — but injuries and underperformance diminished his value. Gray was limited to 117 innings last season because of a strained right trapezius and inflammation in his right elbow and forearm. He went 5–9 with a 5.69 ERA, hardly resembling the pitcher who starred in the 2013 postseason and won 14 games in each of the next two years. Gray was shut down after Aug. 6 but returned for one inning on Sept. 28, hitting 95 mph on the radar gun. If he returns to his old self and the A's struggle as expected, look for Billy Beane to work aggressively to make a deal. A healthy and productive Gray — who cannot be a free agent until after the 2019 season — should command a huge bounty of young players in return.

14 Short stories

Two decades ago, a group of dynamic young shortstops began to make their marks in the majors. Their impact turned out to be extraordinary: Derek Jeter, Alex Rodriguez, Nomar Garciaparra, Miguel Tejada and Edgar Renteria provided unforgettable careers and moments. Another gang of shortstops has come onto the scene in the last two years, and we're already enjoying the show. The Cubs' **Addison Russell** hit a grand slam in the World Series. The Indians' Francisco Lindor hit .368 in the ALCS. The Astros' Carlos Correa won the AL Rookie of the Year award in 2015, and the Dodgers' Corey Seager took the NL honor in 2016. There's even more to the bounty: Trevor Story was a slugging sensation for the Rockies last season, Aledmys Diaz was an All-Star for the Cardinals, and Dansby Swanson — a former No. 1 overall pick, like Correa — emerged as a cornerstone for the Braves. The athleticism, power and savvy of these newcomers — plus others with a bit more service time, such as Xander Bogaerts of the Red Sox, Brandon Crawford of the Giants and Didi Gregorius of the Yankees — make this another golden age for the shortstop.

Gray: Tom DiPace ; Others: AP Images

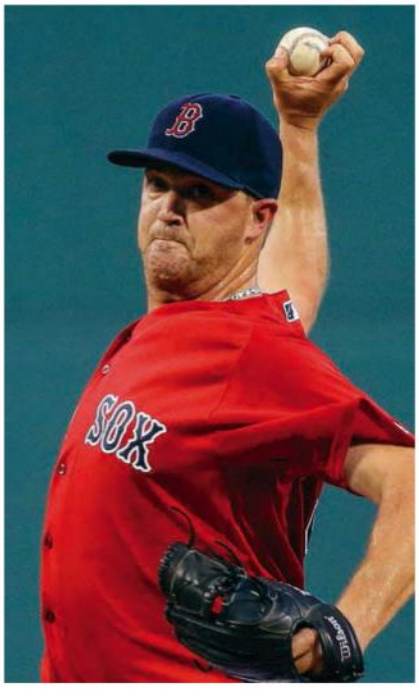


15 D.C. speedway

It's been a decade since any player reached 75 stolen bases in a season. (Jose Reyes had 78 for the Mets in 2007.) Pitchers have gotten quicker and quicker to the plate, and most front offices believe runners must be safe at least 80 percent of the time for the gamble to be worth it. In Washington, though, **Trea Turner** could defy the modern trend. Turner electrified the Nationals as a rookie last season, hitting .340 with 35 stolen bases in 78 games (postseason included). He was caught only six times, giving him an 85 percent success rate. Manager Dusty Baker, 67, played in the era of stolen base kings Rickey Henderson and Tim Raines, and perhaps he will encourage Turner to be even more of a difference maker on the bases. The Nationals have a good chance to return to the playoffs, and if they meet the Cubs there, Turner might do what the Dodgers could not last fall: use his legs to disrupt Jon Lester in a big spot.

16 Knuckling into the future

While R.A. Dickey keeps going, signing to join Phil Niekro's old team in Atlanta at age 42, the latest All-Star knuckleballer had a discouraging second half — through no fault of his own. At 32, Boston's **Steven Wright** emerged last season as the man to keep the knuckleball flame burning, earning a trip to the midsummer classic and going 13–6 with 3.33 ERA in 24 starts. Because his fluttering pitch is so easy on the arm, Wright should have many more years to use it. Problem was, he hurt his shoulder when diving into a base as a pinch-runner and never pitched after Aug. 31. Here's hoping Wright makes a full recovery and carries the knuckleball into the next generation. The pitch will always endure as a last-chance beacon for failing conventional pitchers and even washed-up position players. But if Wright struggles, the best hope for the knuckleball's post-Dickey era — whenever that begins — could be Tampa Bay's Eddie Gamboa, who made seven relief appearances last September.



17 The Dark Knight **returns**

The Mets' Matt Harvey pushed past his recommended innings total in 2015, working into the ninth inning of the final game of the World Series until everything collapsed in Queens. It was a noble effort, and nobody would ever again question Harvey's toughness or commitment. Then came 2016, when Harvey's earned run average rose by more than two runs in a disastrous half-season. Harvey was 4–10 with a 4.86 ERA in 17 starts as his strikeout rate dropped, his walk rate rose, and his trademark consistent, high-end velocity abandoned him. Harvey's season ended mercifully with a shellacking by the Marlins on July 4, his final outing before surgery for thoracic outlet syndrome. As the Mets have learned from Zack Wheeler — who has now missed two full seasons after Tommy John surgery — no operation guarantees that a pitcher will return to full strength. With the steady Bartolo Colon off to Atlanta, and Jacob deGrom and Steven Matz also coming off arm surgery, the return of a swaggering, ace-level Harvey is essential for the Mets to challenge Washington for divisional supremacy and, they hope, get a playoff rematch with a Cubs team they overpowered in those glory days of October 2015.

THE NEW CBA 5 TAKEAWAYS

BY MATT TRUEBLOOD

Fans who remember the 1994-95 strike believe we should all be ecstatic that the owners and the MLB Players Association struck a last-minute deal on a new collective bargaining agreement on Nov. 30, avoiding any disruption of the Winter Meetings or the transaction frenzy of the Hot Stove League. Labor peace has become the top objective in the quinquennial exercise of renegotiating this deal. On the premise that the terms of that peace still matter, though, here are five big takeaways from the new CBA.

1. A victory for real competitive balance

This deal moves MLB closer than it has ever been to a real salary cap. The luxury tax threshold will rise over the five-year term of the agreement, but it will do so slowly, and by scarcely over 10 percent for the full five years. In 2017, the threshold will be $195 million, up (from $189 million) for the first time since 2014. In 2018, that number will rise only to $197 million, so there will have been less than a five percent increase in the threshold in five seasons.

In addition, the penalties teams will pay when they exceed that threshold just got stiffer. The bottom tax rate rises to 20 percent on every dollar spent beyond the $195 million threshold in 2017, while third-time payors will now pay 50 percent on every dollar they spend above the threshold. On top of that, there are new surtaxes on expenditures in excess of $20 million beyond the threshold (12 percent), and on anything in excess of $40 million beyond it (45 percent). On top of that, teams whose payrolls require them to pay any luxury tax will now lose more than others when they sign free agents who received a qualifying offer (an extra pick, albeit a relatively low-impact one, and $1 million in international signing bonus allotment, twice the amount other teams will surrender); get a lesser pick when another team signs a free agent to whom they made a qualifying offer (a selection after the fourth round, instead of after the first or second); and (if they're more than $40 million over the threshold) automatically have their first-round pick bumped backward 10 places.

That amounts to a soft salary cap. No team, under these rules, will be keen to spend beyond the threshold, and the days of the Yankees and Dodgers flouting the system by spending $50 million or more beyond the threshold are almost certainly over. With shared league revenues soaring (giving even the poorest teams the ability to spend $80-100 million without breaking a sweat), these rules dramatically erode the economic advantages that big-market teams have had throughout MLB history.

If only big-league spending were curtailed, of course, teams with inherent advantages in resources would simply divert their spending into stockpiling amateur talent through the draft and international free agency. That isn't the case. The new caps on international spending are tiered — not based on the previous season's record, but on market size and revenue, ensuring that the Davids have a chance to spend more than the Goliaths, if they so choose. Changes in the rules governing the draft under the last CBA have been concretized and expanded upon in this one, too, and they have much the same effect.

2. Free agents are freer than ever

Here's another unambiguously good thing. With the loss of a first-round pick no longer on the table for any team, free agents who receive the qualifying offer have less cause to worry about hitting the open market and finding nothing but closed doors. Over the life of the last CBA, more than a dozen free agents twisted in the wind (to one extent or another) as teams shied away from giving up their top selection in a new draft format that didn't permit them to make up for such a loss.

The result of the qualifying offer system's implementation was that good players could end up with fewer choices and less money than inferior players in the same free-agent class. This tweak alleviates that problem. Perhaps best of all, players who receive the qualifying offer once can't be tethered to it a second time the next year. The next step, for next time: getting rid of the qualifying offer altogether.

Dodgers: AP Images; Mazara: Tom DiPace

3. International free agents got the worst of both worlds

One reason for the uninterrupted labor peace over the last two decades has been the players union's willingness to compromise on almost everything, seemingly giving to owners with both hands. They broke that trend this time around, on one particular front: They bristled at the suggestion of an international draft. A number of Latin American big-league players attended late-stage negotiating sessions to voice their strong opposition to that idea.

Nominally, the union won. There will be no international draft for at least five years. Teenage Latin American stars and young phenoms from the Pacific Rim will still be free agents. However, somehow, the owners got the players to agree to a hard per-team cap on total spending on such players each season, and that cap is extremely low — on the order of $5 million per club for 2017. That represents a likely cutback of about 30 percent in international spending from last year. Slashing spending on players that way will encourage some creative bending of the rules, and clubs figure to spend considerably more on scouts and player development staff who might help the team gain a competitive edge. As mentioned above, this is another nudge toward real competitive balance throughout the market, but it's an unfortunate mechanism. This system will leave more money in the pockets of the billionaires who own MLB teams, and could discourage some elite athletes across the globe from taking up baseball.

4. The game on the field will remain mostly untouched

Rumors of a 26th man being added to big-league rosters came to nothing. Ditto for the notion of reforming the rules that allow teams to call up anyone on their 40-man roster beginning each Sept. 1. There will be no pitch clocks (medical research has suggested those could lead to increases in pitcher injuries, which the game can ill afford), no DH in the National League and no limitations on pitching changes within an inning or game, at least via the CBA. (Most of these are changes that could theoretically be made outside the context of collective bargaining, but the fact that none of them was seriously considered during the negotiations suggests that the status quo will hold in each case.)

Thus, baseball will go on looking for solutions to its self-described pace-of-game and stylistic problems, and the trends toward more power, more strikeouts, more hard throwers, fewer starters pitching deep into games and fewer hits on ground balls are likely to continue unabated. One thing the league did address, on this front: The All-Star Game will no longer determine home-field advantage in the World Series. That will go to the pennant winner with the better regular-season record.

5. The players won small battles but didn't show up for bigger ones

Perhaps distracted by their ill-fated stand against the international draft, or perhaps unable to get any traction because of the precedents in place, the players failed to win any of the needed reforms to roster rules and team control over fringe players. The Rule 5 Draft, which nominally helps talented players blocked within their organization find new homes, has been reduced to an avenue through which teams can acquire those players for dramatically less than their market value, often stunting the player's development and pushing him no closer to a real and lasting opportunity.

Players can still be designated for assignment, thrown into limbo for up to 10 days, claimed on waivers, then designated for assignment again, without getting a chance to elect free agency. Teams can still delay free agency for their star players by a year by waiting three weeks to call them up at the beginning of the season. They can still delay a player's arbitration eligibility by waiting until midsummer to call them up. The minimum salary will remain essentially flat, which is surprising, because the cost of that concession to owners is small, and players had won significant increases in the salary floor in each of the previous two agreements. There's still no good way for young superstars to be paid anywhere close to a superstar's salary, preserving a compensation system that doesn't fit the game's new aging curve.

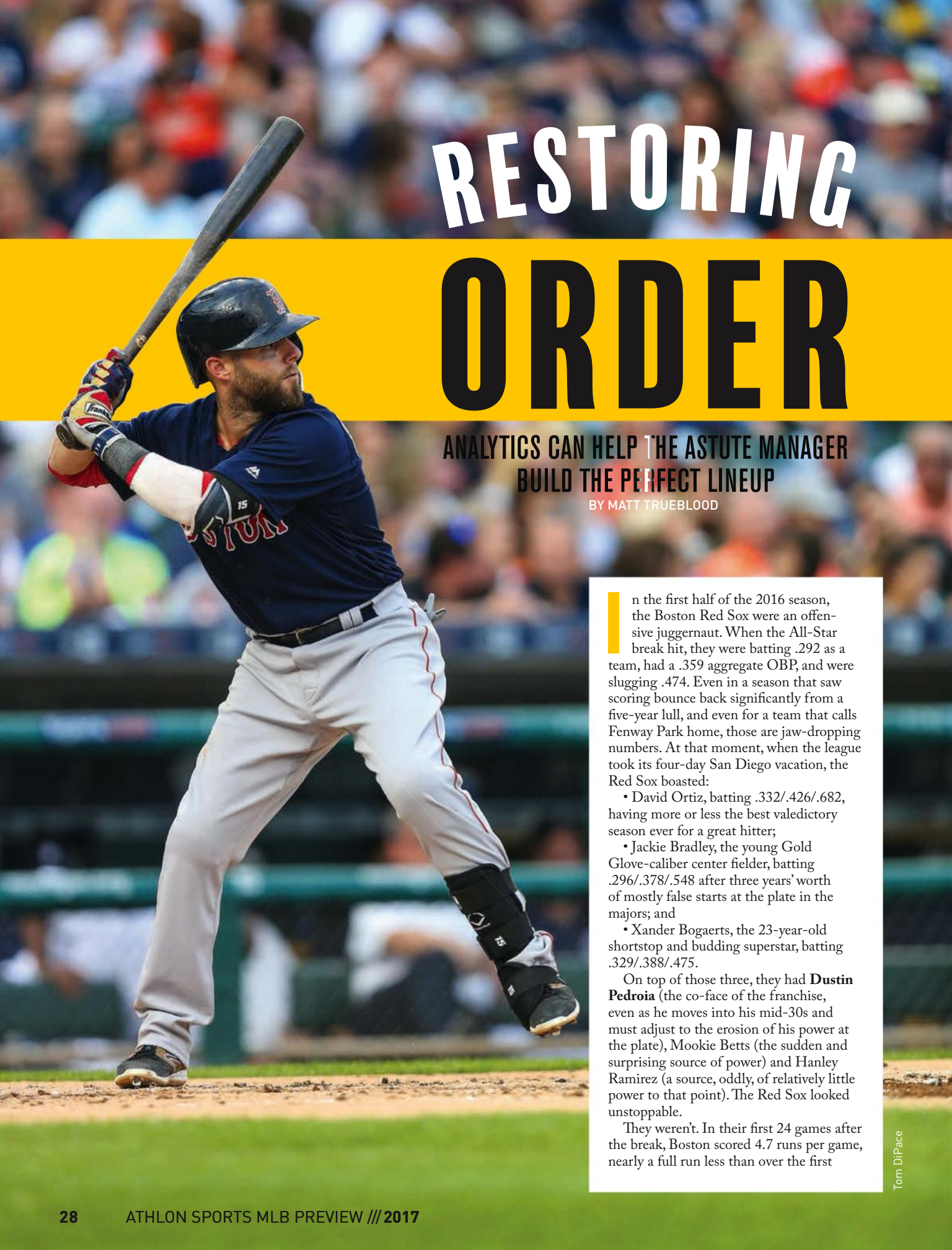
The Rangers spent $5 million to land 2016 rookie sensation Nomar Mazara. Next year, they'll have less than that in their whole international free-agent budget.

Winners and losers

The players lost this negotiation, allowing multiple measures that cap spending artificially. Big-market teams such as the Yankees, Dodgers, Red Sox and Cubs lost, too, as they will have fewer chances to turn their financial advantages into competitive ones. Teams with hefty payrolls and owners wary of the increased taxes and penalties could be in even more trouble.

On the other hand, teams with average or lower revenues and market sizes benefit. The Cardinals have the resources of a big-market team, but because of their market size, they get all of the advantages conferred on small-market teams in the draft and the international talent market under this agreement. The Royals, Twins, Rockies and other hopeful mid-market teams trying to compete more consistently get a big boost from the changes that curb spending for the uber-rich teams who might otherwise railroad them.

Fans are neither winners nor losers. As they have been ever since Bud Selig led a mutiny to overthrow Fay Vincent and turned the job of Commissioner into what might be more precisely called Owner-in-Chief, fans were ignored. The business of MLB these days is maximizing revenue, on the premise that it's less important to give fans the best possible product than it is to sell that product at the highest price the market will bear. If the players union is more prepared for the negotiations in five years, perhaps the result will be a compromise between the owners and players that better serves the fans.



RESTORING ORDER

ANALYTICS CAN HELP THE ASTUTE MANAGER BUILD THE PERFECT LINEUP

BY MATT TRUEBLOOD

In the first half of the 2016 season, the Boston Red Sox were an offensive juggernaut. When the All-Star break hit, they were batting .292 as a team, had a .359 aggregate OBP, and were slugging .474. Even in a season that saw scoring bounce back significantly from a five-year lull, and even for a team that calls Fenway Park home, those are jaw-dropping numbers. At that moment, when the league took its four-day San Diego vacation, the Red Sox boasted:

• David Ortiz, batting .332/.426/.682, having more or less the best valedictory season ever for a great hitter;

• Jackie Bradley, the young Gold Glove-caliber center fielder, batting .296/.378/.548 after three years' worth of mostly false starts at the plate in the majors; and

• Xander Bogaerts, the 23-year-old shortstop and budding superstar, batting .329/.388/.475.

On top of those three, they had **Dustin Pedroia** (the co-face of the franchise, even as he moves into his mid-30s and must adjust to the erosion of his power at the plate), Mookie Betts (the sudden and surprising source of power) and Hanley Ramirez (a source, oddly, of relatively little power to that point). The Red Sox looked unstoppable.

They weren't. In their first 24 games after the break, Boston scored 4.7 runs per game, nearly a full run less than over the first

Tom DiPace

half, and batted .251/.314/.432 as a team. Ortiz slumped. Bradley slumped. Bogaerts slumped. Pedroia and Betts kept hitting, but the offense remained dysfunctional.

On Aug. 10, though, manager John Farrell made a change that, seemingly, revitalized the lineup. He rearranged it. Betts had been Boston's leadoff hitter nearly all season to that point. Farrell moved him to third and, a few days later, to fourth. Pedroia slid from the second slot up to the first. Ortiz moved from fourth to third. Bogaerts moved from third to second.

The effect was immediate — almost. The Sox lost their first two games with Pedroia leading off but then won 31 of their next 43. Over those six-plus weeks, they scored 5.9 runs per game. Farrell's lineup adjustment drew praise for helping to change the trend arrow of Boston's season.

Was that praise deserved? That's a small version of the big questions we'll try to answer here. When Farrell made the change, the Red Sox had just called up Andrew Benintendi, who provided a huge boost at the bottom of the order. Almost immediately after the change, Ortiz's bat woke up (in fact, he was downright dominant again), and Ramirez went on a home run binge that saw him slug over .700 in his next 40 games. The two most directly affected parties (new leadoff man Pedroia and new cleanup hitter Betts) also got hot — in fact, they both hit over .350 in the ensuing six weeks. How much of the revitalization of the Red Sox should we attribute to the way Farrell shuffled their lineup? How much of it was symbiosis, and how much was mere timing? To answer that small question, we must answer bigger ones, so let's take a walk through the lineup.

LEADOFF

For as long as anyone reading this can remember, the leadoff hitter has been a speedster. We've understood for decades now that the real mark of a great leadoff hitter is an exceptional on-base percentage, but speed has remained a crucial part of the leadoff hitter's profile in the minds of most managers. That's probably why Betts, who stole 18 bases in 21 tries through mid-August when Farrell removed him from the first spot, began the season as Boston's leadoff hitter.

Pedroia's speed, such as it ever was, is deeply diminished. So is his power. Neither of those shortcomings hurt Pedroia's ability to ignite an offense that badly needed it, though. Why? Because a leadoff hitter's most important job is getting on base. Power matters relatively little — though a little more in the case of a good offense like Boston's, because that leadoff hitter might find himself coming to bat with more runners on base than most leadoff hitters do — because at least once a game, the leadoff hitter will come to the plate with no one on base and no outs. In those situations, singles and walks are more valuable than ever. Only reaching first base isn't a problem; the offense has three outs left to work with, three or more chances to push the runner around from first base to home.

It's counterintuitive in the extreme, but speed doesn't matter much, either. The guys batting second, third and fourth should be very good. They should hit a lot of extra-base hits and make relatively few outs. Stealing a base in front of a hitters such as Ortiz doesn't have tremendous value, because there's a good chance he would either push that runner along or drive him in himself. On the other hand, being caught derails what might have been a multiple-run rally. Placing Pedroia, a great on-base guy without power, in the leadoff spot was a wise and efficient move by Farrell, though it probably doesn't explain the way Pedroia's performance took off.

SECOND

This is the place where smart managers can derive the greatest edge over those who cling to baseball's conventional wisdom in filling out the lineup card. In weighing where to place a particular batter in the order, there's a tradeoff between the volume of trips to the plate and the number of runners a hitter can expect to find on base when he comes to bat. For the huge majority of baseball history, the top two hitters have been lumped together as table-setters, the guys charged with getting on base and creating great opportunities for the third and fourth batters.

In a glaring example of outdated conventional wisdom, Omar Vizquel spent much of his career batting second — a spot that should be reserved for a hitter who does everything well, not a guy with a career .688 OPS.

Batting third is a better spot for a one-dimensional slugger like Albert Pujols than an elite hitter like Mike Trout.

Now that those tradeoffs can be objectively and precisely valued, though, we know better. Players who bat third do generally have more opportunities to drive in runs than do second hitters, but that gap is outweighed by the value of getting an extra plate appearance about once every nine games. The ideal second hitter does everything well but strikes out a lot — which is roughly the opposite of the kind of player that has traditionally occupied the spot. For most of the game's history, managers have filled the second place in the order with players not quite fast enough to be leadoff men, but who had some bat control and could lay down sacrifice bunts. Contact rate was a prized skill. Omar Vizquel spent a huge part of his career batting second, bunting runners over or trying to hit a ground ball through the right side to get them to third base. That was terrible for the offenses of which he was a part. Vizquel was a below-average hitter, batting in the place where his teams could have gotten the maximum possible value out of guys like Jim Thome, Roberto Alomar and even Barry Bonds.

Contact skills are also somewhat wasted in the second spot. In fact, because there is so often a risk of grounding into a double play, a second hitter is statistically better off striking out than trying to make what fans of Vizquel's vintage (and older) call productive outs. In that way, the contact-oriented approach Pedroia brought to the slot before Farrell's shakeup was a poor fit. Bogaerts also makes a lot of contact, but when he's right, he has considerably more power than Pedroia. Still, he wasn't the optimal choice for that slot in the Red Sox's order.

THIRD

As you might expect, a corollary to the finding that second hitters should be better than you thought is that third hitters should be worse. In fact, of the top five hitters in the batting order, the third hitter should usually be the worst. Third hitters are, statistically, the most likely in the entire order to come to bat with two outs and the bases empty. On balance, they come up in situations in which home runs can be exceptionally valuable (a home run with two outs is far more valuable than one with no outs), but in which walks tend not to be (a walk with two outs requires a steal and a single, an extra-base hit, or a pair of singles to create a run, and there's no margin for error), and outs made are relatively uncostly.

As such, many of history's most notable third hitters have been miscast in those roles. So are some of today's biggest stars. Mike Trout batted third in the Angels' order for most of 2016, but he should have been second. The increasingly homer-reliant Albert Pujols would have been a better third batter. The Red Sox moved Bogaerts out of the third spot but placed Ortiz there instead. That choice somewhat wasted Ortiz's patient approach. Ramirez would have been the perfect choice, given his huge power surge and relative lack of other offensive skills.

FOURTH

For those whose heads are spinning from the rejection of so much conventional wisdom about the top of the order, this will be welcome respite. Batting cleanup means exactly what we've always thought it did. If a team has two excellent hitters, the one who walks a bit more or hits for a higher average should bat second, and the one who hits for more power should bat cleanup. Failing that, the cleanup hitter is simply a well-rounded slugger capable of driving in as high a percentage of the runners on base in front of him as possible. Joe DiMaggio, Willie McCovey and Frank Robinson all spent most of their careers batting cleanup, and with good reason.

There is one secondary thing to consider when placing a cleanup hitter: contact rate. Whereas that skill is overrated in the second slot, it genuinely matters for fourth hitters. They're more likely to come to the plate with runners in scoring position and two out, or with a runner on third and zero or one out, and in those spots, putting the ball in play has value. Betts, whose 30-plus home run power had been wasted for so much of the season in the leadoff spot, was able to create many more runs for Boston once Farrell moved him down to fourth.

FIFTH

At this point, the specialization of lineup positions breaks down a little bit. In an ideal lineup, the fifth hitter is a bit worse than the first, second and fourth hitters, and of about equal overall ability to the third hitter. However, remember that third hitters should be specialists, sluggers who hit home runs but rarely walk. Fifth hitters should, when possible, be more well-rounded. If you have a batter with a fairly well-rounded skill set and good gap power, but not necessarily over-the-fence power, fifth is a good place in the order for him. Ramirez, who was unaffected by the shuffle at the top of Farrell's batting order, doesn't exactly fit that bill. Moving Bogaerts down would have been the best call.

Keep something else in mind: As the number of times a given slot in the batting order drops (the fifth hitter gets between 70 and 75 fewer plate appearances than the leadoff batter over a season), the relative importance of a player's offensive skills does, too. From the middle of the order down, teams should be worrying progressively less about matching players to offensive roles, and progressively more about finding players with exceptional defensive value.

Tom DiPace

SIXTH

We've focused closely on the example of the Red Sox to this point, but from here onward, it will serve our broader conversation better to widen the lens.

The sixth slot is the right place to put a speedster. That's not in keeping with conventional wisdom, but it lines up with common sense. Because of the power the hitters in front of the sixth batter should have, that batter will often come to the plate with the bases already (relatively) clear. Their job, then, is to start a new rally. With the bottom of the order coming up next, though, the sixth hitter has to be able to create a rally himself. If singles don't turn into doubles now and then, the bottom third of the order will never consistently create runs.

Speed should be a secondary consideration, though, and most teams don't have a player who hits the way a sixth hitter should and also happens to run well. Thus, more often, teams look to fill the sixth slot with a hitter whose power can cap rallies cobbled together by the middle of the lineup. Bradley, who notched 63 extra-base hits, did that for Farrell's Red Sox. The ideal sixth hitter would do both, driving the ball with runners on base and stealing bases to give the bottom third of the order opportunities to drive them in.

SEVENTH

A good seventh hitter is a slightly worse version of a good sixth hitter: fast, capable of providing some punch, but prone to making outs. Players with poor on-base skills but other tools usually belong at the bottom of the order. Some lineups (the 2016 Red Sox came closer than most do) truly don't have a player with a miserable OBP, but most have at least one or two. Those players, regardless of their secondary skills, should bat seventh, eighth or ninth.

EIGHTH

In the National League, it's often correct to bat the pitcher eighth. That gambit has been employed consistently by a few managers in recent years, from Tony La Russa of the Cardinals in the early 2000s to Joe Maddon of the Cubs in 2015. We'll talk about why that is a little more when we examine the ideal ninth batter.

In the meantime, a key consideration for eighth hitters who aren't the pitcher, especially those hitters right in front of a pitcher, is power. Pitchers (and most ninth batters even in AL lineups) are rally killers at the plate. Speed has no value when batting in front of a hitter that bad. If an eighth hitter reaches base, the ninth hitter will often be (correctly) asked to bunt him over. Conversely, power is very important. It's crucial that an eighth hitter be able to drive in a runner in front of him, or even himself, so that that job does not fall instead to the ninth guy.

NINTH

The term "second leadoff hitter" is familiar to anyone who's spent much time pondering the construction of a lineup. For others, here's the gist: The leadoff hitter should be a great hitter. If the guys at the bottom of the order are all atrocious, though, only that leadoff man's on-base skills can be brought to bear in the creation of multiple-run rallies. If such a player is available, a ninth hitter should be a guy with no power whatsoever, but who can get on base at roughly an average rate. That way, the lineup's best hitters are slightly less prone to coming to bat with no one on base — starting from scratch.

Benintendi turned out to be the perfect player for the second leadoff hitter role in Boston. Diminutive and young, he wasn't able to tap fully into the power the team hopes he'll have in the long run, but he kept ongoing rallies going and often set up Pedroia and Bogaerts to create runs without cracking extra-base hits down the stretch.

THE STATE OF THE MODERN BATTING ORDER

The changes Farrell made did, on balance, help kick-start the Boston offense in late 2016. He followed some less than perfectly optimal guidelines for constructing a lineup, but the arrangement he settled on in August was more efficient than the ones he had tried up to that point, and it helped springboard a talented team toward the realization of its full potential.

One major tenet of lineup building is that a team's best hitters should bat consecutively. That always has a bracing effect on the team's ability to turn good at-bats into runs. In the Red Sox's case, the two best hitters were clearly Ortiz and Betts, and although Ortiz was an imperfect third hitter in profile, putting him immediately ahead of Betts really helped their combined run production spike.

The Red Sox are just one example of the slow lineup revolution happening league-wide. Slow-footed players like Toronto's Jose Bautista and Cleveland's Carlos Santana have gotten long looks as leadoff hitters in recent seasons. The Cubs' Kris Bryant batted second for the majority of 2016, where his skill set (he's a patient hitter, has huge power, runs the bases well and hits for average, but strikes out frequently) is ideally situated. The old conventions of lineup construction are fading, and the best news is this: Increasingly, teams understand that the best hitters should bat the most often. The most fun lineups aren't the ones with burners and bunters taking up valuable places. They're the ones with many great hitters, stacked as close to the top of the order as possible.

THE PERFECT LINEUP

This isn't an All-Star lineup — though some of these players are All-Stars. It's a lineup of major leaguers who are ideal for each spot in the batting order. And to make it realistic, we have a player for each position.

1. JOEY VOTTO, 1B, REDS The modern game's toughest out, and most consistent producer of long at-bats.

2. MIKE TROUT, DH, ANGELS The best hitter in baseball, for the lineup slot where the best hitter goes.

3. DANIEL MURPHY, 2B, NATIONALS Murphy doesn't walk much at all, but hits for a high average and tons of power.

4. JOSH DONALDSON, 3B, BLUE JAYS One of the game's elite power hitters, Donaldson also doesn't strike out so much as to be a liability with a runner on third and one out.

5. STEPHEN PISCOTTY, RF, CARDINALS Quietly, Piscotty has become a solid right fielder and one of the game's most well-rounded hitters.

6. GREGORY POLANCO, LF, PIRATES Polanco has long levers that can generate light-tower power, but he also runs like a deer.

7. DIDI GREGORIUS, SS, YANKEES Though impatient at the plate, Gregorius has pop, runs well and provides the kind of defensive value a bottom-of-the-order guy should.

8. SALVADOR PEREZ, C, ROYALS Perez discovered new power in 2016, and while he'll always make too many outs to bat near the top of the order, he's a good enough defensive catcher to have big value as a capper of rallies at the bottom of the lineup.

9. ENDER INCIARTE, CF, BRAVES Inciarte has no power of which to speak, but he gets on base consistently enough to start rallies as a lineup turns over. He's also one of the game's best defensive outfielders.

THE PEN IS MIGHTIER

Clubs are relying more on their bullpens than ever before — and allotting their resources accordingly

BY MICHAEL BRADLEY

The Indians' Andrew Miller embodies today's bullpen philosophy: Put your most effective reliever in the highest-leverage situations.

By the time the Cubs completed their historic, now-I-can-die-a-happy-man run to the 2016 World Series title, just about everybody involved in the remarkable seven-game final showdown was trying to scrape the last drops of fuel from their reserve tanks. The 162-game regular season is tough enough on players, but adding another month of the playoff crucible brings an even higher level of damage to players' bodies.

No group was affected more by the '16 postseason than the Cleveland bullpen, which stood in reserve as all of the team's starters not named Corey Kluber struggled to complete even five innings in the Indians' 15 postseason games. The extra work was difficult enough, but doing it when every movement was magnified made things even harder.

"Everything is amplified," Cleveland pitching coach Mickey Callaway says. "One pitch is like throwing three pitches. I don't think our guys could have thrown another pitch."

The man whose arm needed the most rest was reliever Andrew Miller, who made 10 appearances, pitched 19.1 innings and in the seventh game against the Cubs was clearly trying to outwit batters, because he had obviously reached the point of diminishing marginal returns. Because Kluber had been virtually the only Cleveland starter capable of even reaching, much less completing, the sixth inning during the postseason, Miller became even more of a stalwart than he had been during the regular season. Seven of his appearances lasted at least two innings. Compare that with Miller's activity from April through September — with both the Yankees and the Tribe — when he went two or more innings only four times and more than one another seven. Everybody knows players have to step forward during the playoffs, but Miller's workload, along with that of closer Cody Allen, was extreme and seems emblematic of a change in teams' approaches to their relievers.

Prior to the last couple seasons, teams focused on building their starting rotations first, finding an anvil-throwing closer and filling in the rest of the bullpen from there. But Kansas City's 2015 Series victory, fueled by a three-man bullpen brigade that disintegrated rivals' hopes over the last third of games, showed that maybe there was another way. The Royals' performance came at a time when analytics were proving that exposing average starters to opposing batting orders a third and — God forbid — fourth time was not exactly a good idea. As a result, a change is happening, with teams looking for and willing to pay more for outstanding bullpen performers and perhaps deciding that "investing" $8 million a year in a fourth starter might not be the way to go.

"Bullpen use is different now than even it was a few years ago," says Milwaukee pitching coach Derek Johnson. "I think it's going to continue to change. The bullpen is becoming more and more important. In the past, teams were more apt to let starting pitchers go longer. They weren't afraid of the third or fourth time through the lineup. "Now, hitters are figuring things out."

Although Miller and Allen both stretched themselves in the postseason, with Allen going beyond his customary inning five times before throwing two frames in the seventh game versus Chicago, it's unlikely there will be a stampede to use closers for more than an inning moving forward. Because teams want their ninth-inning men ready for action in almost half the games, requiring them to get more than three outs at a time could curtail future use and effectiveness. Rather than demand extra of the closers, teams are becoming more interested in devoting greater financial resources to the rest of the bullpen, the better to preserve late leads and to remove pressure from starters who can't get deep into games.

The result could be a different approach to building a pitching staff. Instead of hoping to construct a rotation of five pitchers able to get through the seventh inning, teams could allot resources differently. Teams could well move away from the idea of investing millions on starters who can't give more than five innings at a time and could go younger at the back end of the rotation and spend more on the bullpen. Take the Cubs, who lost Aroldis Chapman and Travis Wood during the offseason. They added Wade Davis and his $10 million per year salary — and also paid with highly regarded prospect Jorge Soler — and spent $6 million to rent Koji Uehara for the 2017 season. At the same time, they may be moving swingman Mike Montgomery, who is still two years from arbitration and played for just above the minimum last year, to the fifth spot in the rotation. Chicago will no doubt continue to accumulate quality arms and not worry too much about what it costs to acquire them.

Aroldis Chapman's complaints of overuse point to the importance of building an effective bridge from the starter to the closer.

AP Images

Such is the life of a big-market club.

"In a perfect world, you have a seventh-inning guy and eighth-inning guy and a ninth-inning guy," Chicago White Sox pitching coach Don Cooper says. "But not everybody's got three studs like that."

A.J. Hinch makes it sound like the construction of the 2016 Astros bullpen was part of a master plan designed to create a perfect aggregation of late-inning weapons. But it's hard to concoct a set strategy when it comes to building a relief corps.

"It was a fascinating study on how unique every situation can be," the Houston GM says.

In late 2015, the Astros and Phillies pulled off a seven-player trade with its centerpiece Ken Giles, who saved 15 games for the Phils in '15 and had showed the potential to become a first-rate closer. A year earlier, Luke Gregerson had signed as a free agent with Houston, around the same time the team had claimed Will Harris off waivers. Gregerson made $6.25 million last year, but the others were under $550,000 per. Things worked out pretty well for Houston. The trio combined for 194 appearances and 42 saves. Add in the work of Chris Devenski, who Hinch says "came out of nowhere" to post a 2.16 ERA in 48 games, and the Astros had a pretty good bullpen. It's a good thing, too, since only one of their starters — Dallas Keuchel — averaged six innings per outing. As the Astros enter 2017, they remain more committed than ever to making sure their bullpen is strong, dedicating most of their offseason activity to adding pitching.

"Over the years, relievers were always the last thing added in the offseason but the first thing teams would trade for in July," Hinch says. "Teams would have 80 games under their belts and be at the tipping points of their seasons and need help."

As teams fortify their pens, they do so in different ways than even five years ago. There are no more mop-up men. The concept of a "long man" has changed, because almost every game has a need for someone to pitch in the sixth, or even fifth inning. What Milwaukee's Johnson says about hitters' being more successful when they see starters a third and fourth time is important. The "leverage" situations aren't just in the ninth. They can come in the sixth, when a team is holding on to a slim advantage and the other side is sending its mashers to the plate with men on base. If the bullpen is called upon and can't deliver, it doesn't matter whether a team's closer is a fire-breather. He won't get the ball.

"Mike Trout at bat or Robinson Cano at bat in the sixth inning feels important if the bases are loaded," Hinch says. "There is so much ebb and flow of the leverage situations in a game. When you look back at the game, the actual key at-bats are spread out all over."

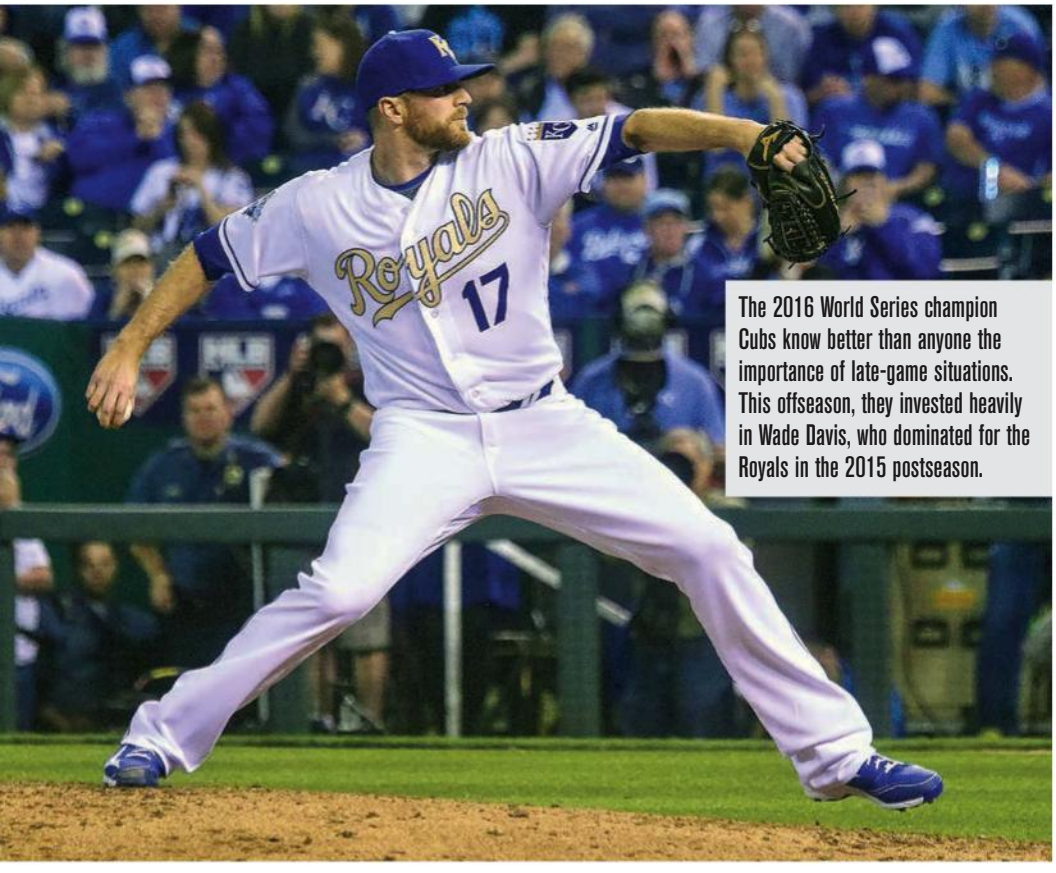
Cooper of the White Sox likes starters who can fight their way through enemy lineups the third and even fourth times. "That's why they get more money," he says. That was certainly the case with Chicago's Chris Sale, but Cooper's job got harder during December when the Sox traded their ace to Boston. Sale averaged 7.1 innings per start last year, making him the only pitcher in the majors over seven a night. If the top-tier guys aren't getting through the seventh inning, what can be expected of Nos. 4 and 5 in the rotation?

That's why some teams are dropping a position player in order to field a 13-man pitching staff. That's a little harder in the American League, thanks to the DH, but the added stick in the lineup makes it more important for teams to have as many fresh arms as possible. Managers are no longer heading into games expecting six or seven from their starters and then two or three from a pair of relievers. They have to spend hours putting together gameplans that consider who is available, who pitches best against specific opposing hitters and who can handle which situations best. It's tough when thinking about doing it over three innings. Figuring it out over four adds a lot more variables. Even though pitching coaches don't tell their starters just to get 15 or 18 outs — "I tell them to get as deep as they can," Kansas City pitching coach Dave Eiland says — teams' preoccupations with pitch counts and starters' inabilities to win battles with hitters who are watching real-time video in between at-bats has forced a new perspective.

"Once you get past the fifth inning, you need to get 12 outs," Eiland says. "Managers want to get their pitchers out after the fifth or sixth inning. Teams are lucky if they have guys like [Cubs stars] Jon Lester and Jake Arietta.

"Managers want to turn to their bullpens more quickly than before."

As a result, teams are forced to stock their bullpens with as many live arms as possible and then make sure they are able



The 2016 World Series champion Cubs know better than anyone the importance of late-game situations. This offseason, they invested heavily in Wade Davis, who dominated for the Royals in the 2015 postseason.

AP Images

to make it through the season. No matter how durable a pitcher may be, he still can't be used in more than half the games in a season. Okay, no more than half the season plus one game, as San Diego's Brad Hand — who appeared in a league-high 82 games — was last year. His low WHIP (1.108) and 11.2 Ks/9IP were impressive, but the Padres couldn't run him out there every night. And it will be interesting to see how well he handles a high workload this season, since Hand hadn't pitched in more than 38 games in his career before '16. San Diego definitely doesn't want to risk abusing him, or it could be Aloha, Mr. Hand.

A total of 14 pitchers threw 75 times or more last season throughout the majors, and their teams were lucky to have them. But with starters giving their clubs fewer and fewer innings every season, teams need to manage their bullpens more carefully than ever. That means understanding who is available and in what combinations before games and then making decisions about what the most important points in the game are.

"It's about the feel of the game," Johnson says. "Managers and coaches have to decide what may be the most important part of the game. Some managers do a good job at determining what the highest leverage point is. When they do, they have to have someone out there who can get the job done."

That "someone" isn't so easy to find, even if clubs are trying to be devote more financial resources to the bullpen. And corralling more than one top-notch relief arm is even tougher. It would be ideal if a team were able to develop a collection of late-inning arms through its system, but it's not always easy to tell when it's right to convert a starter to a reliever. Sometimes, the decision is easy to make, particularly if a pitcher has trouble making it through the third, or even the second, confrontation with opposing lineups.

According to Cooper, sometimes that can be a big benefit to a pitcher, because he has been "pacing himself" to last longer. Having the knowledge that he'll be pitching only an inning or at most two could lead him to cut loose and add some velocity to his fastball. "He may be suited better for relieving and want to lay it on the line for two innings, rather than seven," Cooper says. But teams don't want to surrender potential starters so quickly. No matter how much more committed a club could be to its bullpen, the goal is to have the man who begins the game get as far into it as possible. Complete games are rare these days, but when someone gets into the eighth inning, there isn't much need for relievers.

"You want everybody to be a starter, because those are the bulk innings," Cooper says. "But you have to look at pitchers in the minor leagues and ask if you see a guy as more of a reliever."

In the years to come, teams will try to stock their bullpens with a collection of talent capable of handling leverage situations from the fifth inning on. It would be great to have a set hierarchy, as the Royals did in 2015, but a more likely scenario is a few defined roles and then a variety of pitchers who can throw in several situations, since it's impossible to use even the best reliever 162 times a year. Teams need to concoct nightly combinations capable of handling whatever happens, simply because there is more work to be done.

> *"The bullpen is becoming more and more important. In the past, teams were more apt to let starting pitchers go longer. They weren't afraid of the third or fourth time through the lineup. Now, hitters are figuring things out. — Brewers pitching coach Derek Johnson"*

And then there are the closers, whose roles remain perhaps the most clearly defined of any relief pitchers. The last three outs remain the hardest to get, even if the seventh inning brought the meat of a rival's order to the plate, and the eighth featured a couple hitters who had been on hot streaks. The closer remains a rare species in the MLB jungle.

"It's more than physical talent," Eiland says. "As good as a guy can be in the seventh or eighth innings, the ninth is a different animal. You're working without a net and are the last line of defense."

That doesn't mean teams aren't trying a few different approaches to the position. For instance, in 2016, the Phillies used Jeanmar Gomez in the role, even though he had a total of one save in 185 prior big-league appearances over six seasons. Though Gomez tired in August and September, he still responded with 37 saves. But he posted only 47 strikeouts in 68.2 innings, and some thought the Phils' setup man, Hector Neris (102 Ks in 80.1 IP) was better suited for the role. "Maybe the closer role is a lot easier than what other people think of it," Callaway says.

No matter who's doing the closing, it isn't at all risky to say that we won't be seeing a lot of four- and five-out save situations, as we did in the playoffs and World Series. The mental aspect of it plays a role, because the vast majority of closers prepare themselves to get the last three outs and are most comfortable stomping out of the bullpen, perhaps to some menacing heavy metal anthem, rather than sitting in the dugout between the eighth and ninth innings, waiting to return to the mound. Further, with so many games and stretches during the season that extend to 15-to-20 days in a row without a break, the idea of adding innings to a closer's arm won't be too popular. And now that Chapman has complained that Cubs manager Joe Maddon misused him during the postseason, skippers and pitching coaches may be even more careful.

"What you saw in the playoffs the last couple years can't be done during the 162-games season," Eiland says. "You're going to break guys. In a seven-game series, you have a couple days off for travel, and you can do it. But even in the World Series you saw that [Andrew] Miller was beat up and [Cody] Allen was beat up. You aren't going to see it."

Until the games really matter.

SEARCHING FOR AN ACE

BY MIKE BERARDINO

White Sox GM Rick Hahn hopes that offseason acquisition Reynaldo Lopez (opposite), who came to Chicago in the Adam Eaton trade, follows the pattern established by Noah Syndergaard (above), Corey Kluber (above, right) and Max Scherzer (right) — now-established aces who were traded early in their careers before their talent had truly blossomed.

White Sox general manager Rick Hahn's offseason dealmaking did more than reshape the roster for the rebuilding Sox. It also put Hahn at the forefront of a movement that is transforming the way that teams develop that most elusive and critical of weapons: the rotation ace.

Hahn was able to pry away 22-year-old pitching phenom Lucas Giolito and fellow righthanders Reynaldo Lopez and Dane Dunning from the Nationals in exchange for Adam Eaton, a scrappy outfield darling of modern analytics. A day earlier, Hahn swung a deal that sent established ace Chris Sale to the Boston Red Sox for second baseman Yoan Moncada, the game's top-rated prospect, and Class A righthander Michael Kopech, the Curt Schilling doppelganger from East Texas who had just wowed scouts at the Arizona Fall League.

And just like that, Hahn did more than just revamp the White Sox farm system. He added a handful of future aces who could soon fit neatly in a growing trend: high-end pitching prospects who have changed teams before reaching their peak.

This past fall saw no fewer than 13 different pitchers make postseason starts after having been traded by age 27. Ten of those were traded by age 25, including Max Scherzer, Rick Porcello, Corey Kluber, Trevor Bauer, Noah Syndergaard and Kyle Hendricks.

Expand the list to last year's 52 starting pitchers to produce at least 2.0 Wins Above Replacement, as measured by FanGraphs.com, and 29 of them (55.7 percent) changed organizations by age 27. Lower the threshold to age 25, and the percentage drops only to 40.4 percent.

Included among this latter group is 60 percent of the Tampa Bay Rays 2016 rotation: Chris Archer, Jake Odorizzi and Drew Smyly. Archer, in fact, was traded twice by age 23, getting moved in deals for Mark DeRosa (by the Cleveland Indians) and Matt Garza (Chicago Cubs).

Others moved along at a young age: Jose Quintana, released by the Mets at 18; Michael Pineda, shipped out of Seattle for weight-challenged slugger Jesus Montero; Robbie Ray, Collin McHugh, Adam Wainwright, Jerad Eickhoff and Zach Davies.

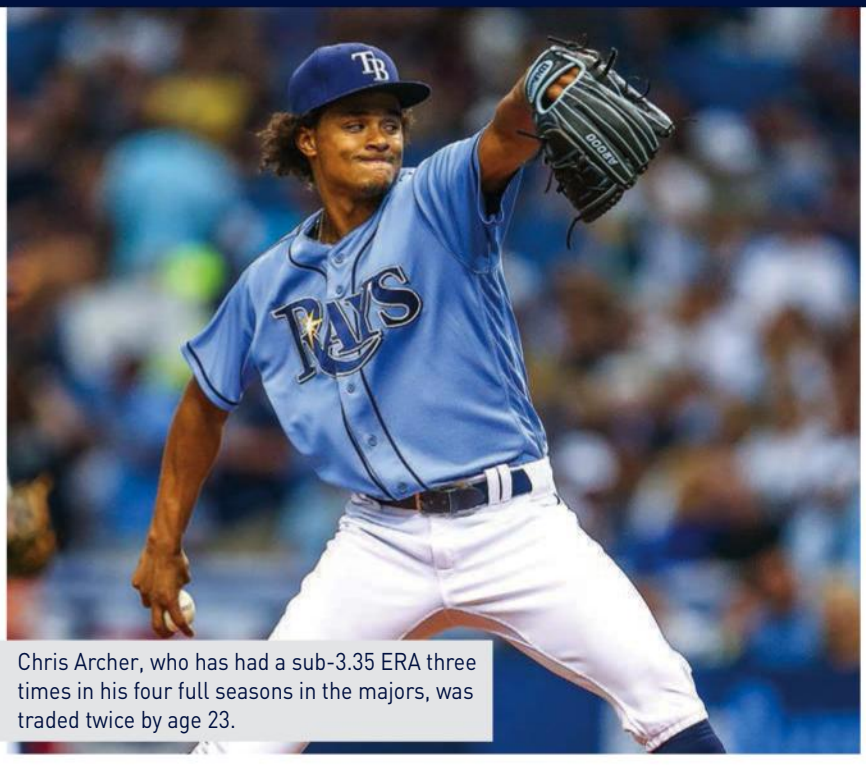
What in the name of Branch Rickey is going on here?

"You're trying to do the best deal for your club and you throw things against the wall," Hahn says. "If they get rejected, they get rejected, and if there's some traction there you guys both sort of bear down and try to grind it out. The fact of the matter is in moving a Chris Sale or moving a talented and controlled player like Adam Eaton, really there shouldn't be any players within a system you don't at least ask about and have some level of dialogue about."

Even if they come with $100 million arms attached to their torsos.

In Ned Colletti's nine seasons as GM from 2006-14, the Los Angeles Dodgers won the National League West four times and suffered just one losing season (barely). That came in 2010, when they

Kluber: Tom DiPace ; Others: AP Images



Chris Archer, who has had a sub-3.35 ERA three times in his four full seasons in the majors, was traded twice by age 23.

went 80–82 in Joe Torre's final season.

In that span, the Dodgers were never able to be the sort of deadline sellers that typically have the best chance of prying away a promising young arm from an all-in trade partner.

"To be able to acquire them that young, you typically have to find a team that is in a different place than you are — i.e., they're trying to win today and you're still trying to build so you've got a little bit of time to continue to develop," says Colletti, who now serves as senior adviser to Dodgers president/CEO Stan Kasten. "You've got to find a team that's in that spot, and then you've got to be patient — and the toughest thing in these jobs is patience."

Analytics play a role in this, as they do in nearly every aspect of modern talent procurement, but there's still no substitute for good, old-fashioned scouting acumen. Starting at the amateur level and continuing on through the draft and into the low minors, scouts are constantly getting updated looks at the game's most promising (and confounding) young arms.

"It really comes down to watching guys pitch, watching them compete," Colletti says. "It even begins as early as the amateur side, when you're watching somebody compete as a 17-year-old or as a college pitcher. How do they prepare? How tough are they? How tough-minded? Do they progress?"

That part is key.

"Pitching, to me, is a constant evolution because you almost have to learn pitch by pitch," Colletti says. "If you see somebody who was pretty good as a 19-year-old and then excellent as a 24-year-old, you know there was constant progression there, there's a constant thought process. You see people level out at 18 or 19 years old and then you see them at 24, 25 and they're kind of the same or they've taken a step back, that, to me, is somebody you don't really want to get too deeply involved in."

Then again, sometimes the light goes on just when everybody in the game is ready to write off a talented young arm. Or maybe it's just more a matter of circumstance and opportunity.

How else to explain the way a lefthander with the repertoire of Drew Pomeranz was traded four times by age 27? Cleveland, Colorado, Oakland and San Diego all sent him packing for various levels of return.

There's also a long tradition of executives trying to squeeze one more arm out of a deal whenever possible. During his 12 seasons running the Marlins' baseball operations — which included a World Series title in 2003 — Larry Beinfest held firm to his philosophy that you never part with pitching in any trade without getting at least one quality arm back.

"That's the way the game has always been," Colletti says. "You pick a kid with a good arm (from another system). You pick somebody, if they've got one great pitch and they're a young kid, maybe they can develop a second pitch and end up in the bullpen. Maybe you can strike it rich and have him become a big-league starter. But pitching is the greatest currency always, so it's usually tough to pry it away."

The Cubs ended their 108-year championship drought with the help of trade acquisitions such as Jake Arrieta and Hendricks, the latter of whom came from the Texas Rangers in 2012 in a deal for Ryan Dempster. Meanwhile, the Indians pushed the World Series to a 10th inning in Game 7 with help from Kluber and Bauer.

In Kluber's case, the former fourth-round pick (2007) out of Stetson University was still puttering along in Double-A for the San Diego Padres when the Indians were able to land him in a three-way deal in July 2010.

Total cost to the Indians: veteran righthander Jake Westbrook, then working to a 4.65 ERA through 21 starts.

"You want to talk about a perfect confluence of scouting and our metrics," says Derek Falvey, then working in the baseball operations department under Mark Shapiro and Chris Antonetti. "Chris Smith, who's presently a scout for the Los Angeles Dodgers, was a guy who was a huge Corey Kluber advocate. Not just because of the pitcher he was, but because of the makeup, the work ethic and all the things we know about Corey Kluber today that maybe we were predicting would come when he was in Double-A."

Kluber, then 24, was pitching his second straight year for the San Antonio Missions of the Texas League. His combined ERA through 31 outings and 167.2 innings at that level: 3.76.

Good, but nothing to signify he would become a future Cy Young Award winner with a WAR of 18 over the past three seasons (only Clayton Kershaw has more, per FanGraphs.com).

Then again, Kluber's nine-inning strikeout rate at Double-A had jumped from 7.0 the year before to 10.0 when the Padres included him in the deal that brought them outfielder Ryan Ludwick. Better still, Kluber's nine-inning walk rate had plummeted from an alarming 6.8 in 2009 to just 2.9 through the first four months in 2010. Those trend lines mostly continued over the ensuing seasons before Kluber took his big step forward in 2013.

"That's a credit to Klubs and the work he's put in," says Falvey, hired last fall as the first chief baseball officer of the Minnesota Twins, "but also the identification of it was a combination of the metrics and our scouting opinion."

Some would say Kluber was floundering at Double-A when the Indians plucked him away, but Falvey doesn't see it that way.

"I wouldn't necessarily call it 'floundering,'" Falvey says. "It's development, right? When you get to different levels, you have to take a step and learn more. I think Corey

Tom DiPace

would be the first to tell you when he got to the major leagues there was still some development left and he got better over time. That's a testament to who he is as a person and a worker."

Bauer, meanwhile, was drafted third overall by the Arizona Diamondbacks out of UCLA in 2011. Five picks later, the Indians took Florida high-school shortstop Francisco Lindor, so their level of familiarity with Bauer was high.

"Trevor was a high-profile draft pick, so everyone knew who Trevor was," Falvey says. "But also I think we knew the background around him because of the work our amateur scouts had done during the draft process. We'd done the work on Trevor, so we knew a lot about his background. In addition to that, we had a lot of information surrounding him from pitching programs that we had been associated with."

From the time he was in the eighth grade, Bauer had been a prized pupil of pitching guru Ron Wolforth, owner-operator of the Texas Baseball Ranch north of Houston. While that connection and Bauer's many unconventional arm-maintenance routines eventually caused tension with the Diamondbacks, the Indians had already been in contact with Wolforth to learn more about his methods and philosophies.

When Bauer stumbled to a 6.06 ERA through a four-start big-league audition in 2012, issuing an unsightly 7.2 walks per nine innings, the Indians pounced. That December, they worked out a nine-player, three-team trade that cost them four pieces, including Korean outfielder Shin-Soo Choo, but netted them Bauer, outfielder Drew Stubbs and two relievers, including current setup man Bryan Shaw.

On that one the Indians had a number of key voices recommending the move.

"There wasn't one single person," Falvey says. "It was a collaborative effort to help come to that decision, and when we had the opportunity to acquire (Bauer), we were excited about the chance to get a young, upside, controllable starter like him."

That doesn't even take into account righthander Carlos Carrasco, grabbed at 22 from the Philadelphia Phillies in the Cliff Lee deal of July 2009. Knocked out for the postseason by a September line drive that fractured a finger on his pitching hand, Carrasco has won a combined 25 games for the Indians over the past two seasons.

"Look at Cleveland," Colletti says. "They made good trades and they developed, but they were also patient through the process of waiting for a lot of good young players to bubble to the top and then be able not only to compete at the top but compete at the highest level at the top."

With all these high-impact young arms having changed teams in recent years, it might be reasonable to wonder if somehow young position players are being guarded more assiduously than their mound counterparts.

Hahn, still flush from the double-barreled trades that netted his White Sox what they hope will be the basis of their near- and long-term future, doesn't subscribe to that theory.

"It's still one of the more difficult things in the game to acquire: high-impact pitching, front-end type guys who are reliable and No. 1, No. 2 types," Hahn says. "The more of those you can have running around, the better, and the longer you can keep them together, the easier it will be to keep yourself in ballgames and hopefully play deep into October."

After watching the mileage their division rivals in Cleveland got from the likes of Kluber, Bauer and Carrasco, did that leave the White Sox even more convinced it was time to reach out and grab a Giolito, a former first rounder and himself owner of a 6.75 ERA (and 4.6 K/9) through a mere 21.1 big-league innings?

"I don't think there's any one club that has cornered the market on having young, controllable guys," Hahn says. "We, like every club, are interested in high-impact, front-end-of-the-rotation guys who can grow together and be together for a long period of time. Cleveland certainly has done a wonderful job putting that together, as have other clubs. The Mets, for example, are top of mind along those lines and something similar to what we aspire to be."

Falvey, searching for the same type of young arms for the Twins that his former employer was able to identify and acquire, doesn't think the process has become easier.

"I wouldn't necessarily call it easy and say they're flowing around when you're trading Adam Eaton and Chris Sale," Falvey says with a laugh. "Those are not easy decisions to make. Those are very influential major-league players. That's hard. So teams are definitely valuing their young pitching, I would say, the same way if not more than in the past."

Having the courage to dream a bit on pitcher projection plays as vital a role as ever. "It's a combination of first and foremost great scouting, getting to know the players," Falvey says. "Ultimately, when you talk about young players being traded, they probably haven't reached their peak. You need to be forward-looking with that group of players, and that starts with the scouts. You need to know the work habits, the work ethic of the guy. How's he going to deal with adversity and failure? It's likely he's going to face some along the way because he's not a finished product yet."

At that point, it's incumbent on modern organizations to layer in the advanced metrics in an effort to "help you clarify some of the noise that's out there on how you separate those players," Falvey says.

Leave it to Colletti, who got his start with the Chicago Cubs in the early 1980s and later helped build a pennant winner with the San Francisco Giants, to put the eternal pitching search into perspective. He thinks back to a young Greg Maddux, who put up ERAs north of 5.50 in each of his first two cracks at the majors.

"If you look at his first two seasons or you look at Tom Glavine's first season or two, if you just looked at the numbers you'd say, 'Oh, well, this guy's not going to be much,'" Colletti says. "But you had to see who he was and see how he prepared and see how he could adapt to everything."

Colletti, who traded twice for Maddux with the Dodgers near the end of the righthander's Hall of Fame career, always realized there were no shortcuts.

"All knowledge is powerful, across the board," he says. "Seeing somebody, reading about him, reading a report, using analytics — all information is powerful. But you need to know your own players, and you need to know whoever you're going after as well as possible. That's when good deals are made."

"It's still one of the more difficult things in the game to acquire: high-impact pitching, front-end type guys who are reliable and No. 1, No. 2 types. The more of those you can have running around, the better, and the longer you can keep them together, the easier it will be to keep yourself in ballgames and hopefully play deep into October." — White Sox GM Rick Hahn

Swing FOR THE Fences

A new plan at the plate has resulted in a power surge — from a variety of sources

BY MATT TRUEBLOOD

Over the final four months of the 2016 season, Brian Dozier hit home runs at a dizzying rate. He finished with 42, and a staggering 37 came over his final 109 games. Even in a season that saw home runs fly out of MLB ballparks at a nearly unprecedented rate, that was an unbelievable hot streak. It was remarkable, too, that it would be Dozier who would enjoy such a torrid stretch. The diminutive second baseman is sturdily built, and his swing communicates his intention to do damage at the plate, but he doesn't fit the usual physical, positional or skills profile of a league-leading slugger. At first glance, his ability to launch so many balls out of the park is difficult to explain.

Dozier became a hot commodity on the trade market after the Twins' dreadful season. On the free-agent market, meanwhile, a quartet of big-name sluggers populated the market for power hitting, including the longtime face of the Blue Jays, Jose Bautista. Though he had a quiet (and injury-shortened) season by his standards in 2016, Bautista leads MLB with 249 regular-season home runs since the start of 2010. (He's added six playoff long balls during the Blue Jays' consecutive playoff pushes the last two years, trailing only Daniel Murphy on that leaderboard.) Now in his late 30s and without Dozier's athleticism, Bautista is very much the physical prototype of a slugger.

Different as the two are in terms of body type, though, they come by their elite power the same way. For that matter, their secret is shared by Cubs wunderkinds Addison Russell and Kris Bryant, and aging curve defiers Ian Kinsler and the now-retired

Tom DiPace

David Ortiz. Bautista is the godfather of the movement, and over the last five years (with offense facing an existential threat unseen in the previous 20 years), his philosophy has spread like wildfire. Welcome to the age of the dead-pull power hitter.

Perhaps that sounds like hyperbole. After all, the archetype of a slugger looking to turn on and crush a mistake is hardly a new one. Baseball history is dotted with such players. For much of the game's existence, though, that trait has been decried as troglodytic. The great hitters, a color commentator will tell you, "use the whole field," "find the gaps," and "hit the ball where it's pitched." Willie Mays, Mickey Mantle and Reggie Jackson were known primarily for their opposite-field power. Jackson insists that he never really learned to hit good inside pitches, but instead learned to lay off them, and drove the ball the other way when he got pitches on the outer part of the plate. During the Steroid Era (during which, we should note, not all hitters were using steroids to achieve the effect), opposite-field power reached its peak across the league. Mike Piazza hit balls to right center field at Dodger Stadium that flew further than any hit even by left-handed hitters in living memory. Manny Ramirez and Sammy Sosa both thrived by driving the ball to right field and were much better hitters when they learned to do so.

In the modern game, though, going the other way and getting the ball over the wall is increasingly difficult. As recently as 2009, Derek Jeter, Joe Mauer and Adam Lind each had double-digit opposite-field home runs. Elite power wasn't necessarily required to drive the ball out that way. In the seven seasons since, however, only Miguel Cabrera, Joey Votto and Adrian Gonzalez have reached 10 opposite-field homers in a single campaign. (Cabrera has done it twice.) Pitchers throw harder than ever, are better than ever at busting opposing hitters inside, and induce more swings and misses than ever. For a while, the game underwent a minor power outage, as players across the league struggled to adjust.

Bautista had the answer all along, though. He first made his big adjustment late in 2009, when a hitting coach encouraged him to start his swing sooner in order to get the barrel of his bat to the ball on time. Bautista tried it, had some success, began starting the swing even sooner, and had even more.

Small mechanical changes allowed him to start his bat path lower, too, so that he could swing slightly up at the ball without losing bat speed. With those mechanical changes came an important change in approach: Bautista began swinging less often at pitches low in the strike zone. With the zone cut in half vertically, Bautista could force pitchers to execute perfectly, or else pay a heavy price. Over the last seven seasons, Bautista has slugged .757 on pitches in the upper third of the strike zone — the highest figure in baseball, according to Baseball Savant.

Bautista had all the physical tools to succeed with his new swing and approach, and he has rarely struggled since he implemented those changes. His big leg kick provides plenty of power and leverage, and his height allows him to employ that kind of big lower-body movement without steepening his bat path so much that consistent contact becomes impossible to achieve. Dozier, out of necessity, does things differently. He hits from a more spread-out stance than does Bautista, and his stride covers plenty of ground horizontally, but his front foot is never as far from the ground as Bautista's. He creates that slight uppercut that comes so naturally to Bautista by driving low with his back hip and leg and rotating up and through the ball.

Nolan Arenado, another new devotee of the Bautista school of slugging, does it somewhat differently from the other two. He taps his back foot as the pitcher begins his delivery, getting both legs moving and starting a torrent of energy that crashes forward, as he strides (not as low as Dozier, but without Bautista's high leg kick) and whips his bat through the hitting zone. Rank all qualifying hitters by their percentage of balls hit in the air to the pull field in 2016, and these three otherwise very different players rank first (Dozier), second (Arenado) and third (Bautista).

They're but the tip of the iceberg. FanGraphs has league-wide batted ball data going back to 2002, and in the 15 seasons since then, none saw as high an aggregate fly ball rate on balls hit to the batter's pull field as 2016. One reason (though probably not the only one) for the home run outburst that helped define the season is that more batters were able to get around on the ball, and still put it in the air. It's tempting, because they all do so somewhat differently, to dismiss the idea that this is a real movement, with a coherent philosophy at its core. Perhaps it's especially tempting because of that aforementioned bias baseball men have generally held against power hitters. That's the best part about this phenomenon: It puts the lie to that old way of thinking. Hitters who focus on getting the ball in the air, and pulling it as often as possible, aren't one-dimensional. They aren't hacks. The myriad mechanics and subtle differences in approach that these players use to achieve the same basic result speak to their individual adaptability, self-awareness and understanding of their objectives as hitters.

If you listen to many of these hitters talk about their swings, it's easy to hear those things. These are impassioned practitioners of an art form they've worked hard to understand. Yet, they disagree on so many things. Josh Donaldson, who's been a slightly more aggressive clone of Bautista since before he was traded to Toronto and joined Bautista on two Blue Jays playoff clubs, generates his power with a leg kick (but strong balance on his back leg, from the heel through the hip) and a rotational sequence that builds kinetic energy that he can release into the ball. Two of his crucial tenets of hitting are landing with his front foot open (that is, pointed somewhere out into the field, as opposed to toward the first-base dugout) and allowing the rest of his body to create the tension and energy that bring his hands through the zone.

Hitters who focus on getting the ball in the air, and pulling it as often as possible, aren't one-dimensional. They aren't hacks. The myriad mechanics and subtle differences in approach that these players use to achieve the same basic result speak to their individual adaptability, self-awareness and understanding of their objectives as hitters.

Yet, Bryant keeps a relatively closed front foot and is just as good as Donaldson at turning on and lifting the ball. Mike Napoli virtually starts his swing by dropping his hands low, getting his bat down below the path of the incoming pitch so that he can swing up into it. Napoli hit 34 home runs

Brian Dozier hits from a spread-out stance, and his stride covers plenty of ground horizontally, but his front foot is never far from the ground. He creates a slight uppercut by driving low with his back hip and leg and rotating up and through the ball.

in 2016, and 24 of them were pulled to left field. Mookie Betts' swing involves none of the signature changes of posture or position that allow the others to consistently get under the ball, but his lightning-quick hands and willingness to cut his strike zone in half (he's much more aggressive on the inner half of the plate, and even on pitches inside on him, than on anything from the middle of the plate away) allowed him to yank 27 home runs out of the park to left field last season.

The one unifying element, the thing almost all of these great pull-happy sluggers have in common, is a preference for pitches up in the zone. A pitch down near the knees can be gotten, if the batter is looking for it, and if his natural swing allows for enough arm extension to reach it without losing bat speed, but the best low-ball hitters tend to be ones who use the opposite field (Miguel Cabrera, Freddie Freeman and Trevor Story, to name three prominent examples from 2016). Bautista slugged .538 when putting a ball in the lower third of the zone in play last year, but .620 for the middle third and .604 in the upper third. Dozier (.446 in the lower third, .727 in the middle third and a staggering, league-leading .910 in the upper third) and 2016 AL home run champion Mark Trumbo are even more stark case studies. Arenado (with his unbelievable athleticism and long limbs), Betts (with that adjustable, hands-driven bat path) and Napoli (whose hand drop gets the bat down to that level easily) all acquit themselves well on lower pitches, but most of the group we've discussed thrive by laying off low pitches to which their swings aren't especially conducive, and counting on the opposing hurler to get the ball up eventually. The very low strike, which umpires called more consistently in 2014 and 2015, went away last year, helping the batters win the battle of wills and get more of those pitches in the upper part of the zone.

That's where the final thread that ties all of these hitters together becomes visible. It actually extends far back into the dark ages of hitting, when hardly anyone understood just how valuable driving the ball in the air to the pull field could really be. That thread stretches back, in fact, past World War II, to Ted Williams, and before him, to Babe Ruth. It was Ruth who first demonstrated that hitting the ball in the air didn't have to mean flying out lazily to the center fielder, and it was Williams who thoughtfully, painstakingly laid out the case not only for a slightly upward bat path, but also for working hard to get the right pitch at which to swing. Williams' book, *The Science of Hitting*, has been an inspiration and a source of wisdom for countless hitters since it came out in the early 1970s. Amazingly, it's a near-perfect manifesto for the modern power hitter. The lingo belongs to a bygone era of baseball, but the principles of working the count, knowing when to expect a pitch to hit and then turning on it with loft and violence are the building blocks of the approach that has made the late-blooming Bautista and Donaldson, the undersized Dozier and the injury-ravaged Napoli into elite power threats, and that has made natural studs Bryant, Arenado and Betts into transcendent stars in their mid-20s.

Baseball's past always shapes its present and its future. In this case, the future has arrived, thanks to Bautista, and 40 years before that, to Williams.

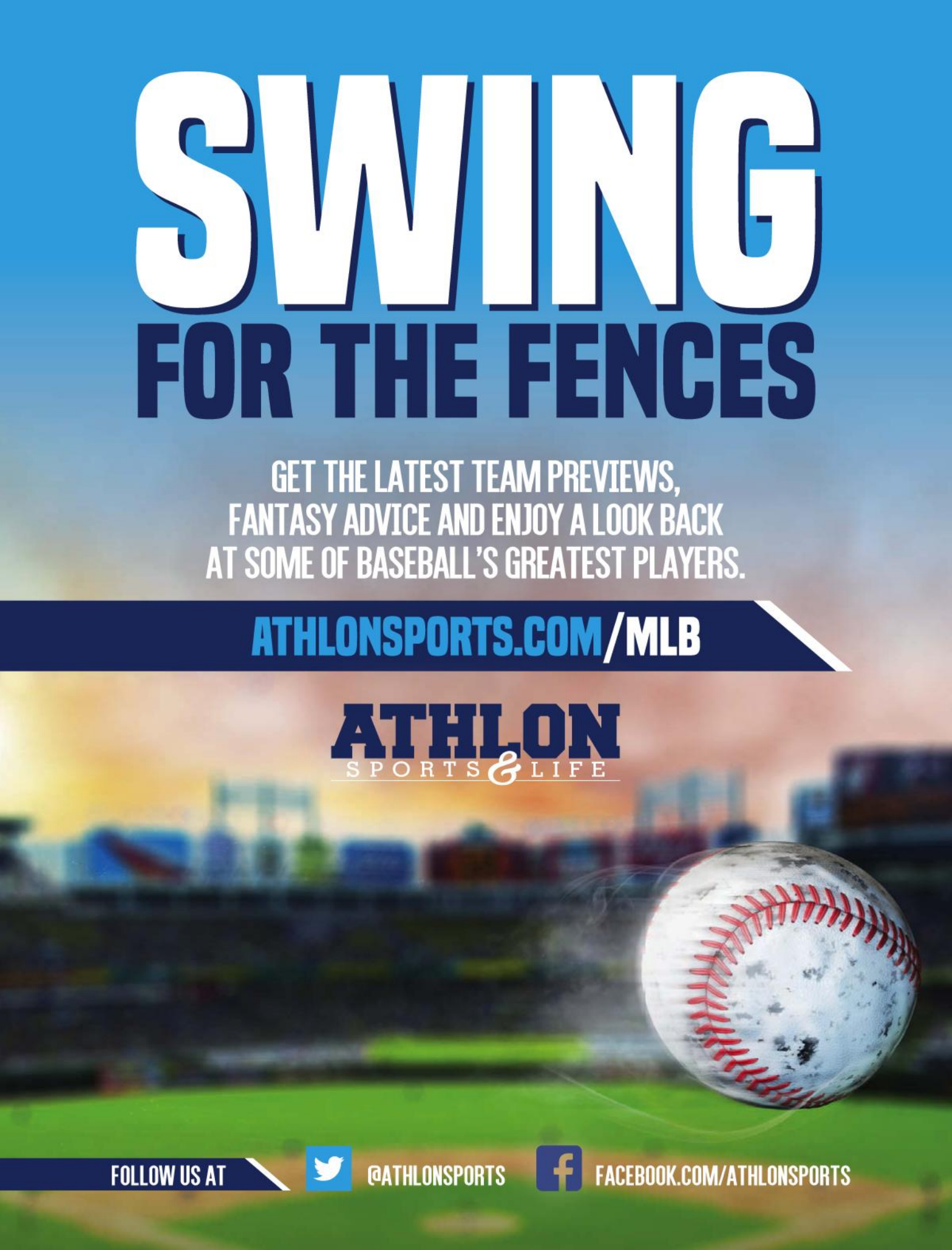
Tom DiPace

SWING FOR THE FENCES

GET THE LATEST TEAM PREVIEWS,
FANTASY ADVICE AND ENJOY A LOOK BACK
AT SOME OF BASEBALL'S GREATEST PLAYERS.

ATHLONSPORTS.COM/MLB

ATHLON
SPORTS & LIFE



FOLLOW US AT @ATHLONSPORTS FACEBOOK.COM/ATHLONSPORTS

A CLASS *by Himself*

MIKE TROUT'S GREATNESS IS EVIDENT IN HIS NUMBERS, BUT IT BECOMES EVEN CLEARER WHEN YOU WATCH HIM PLAY BY MATT TRUEBLOOD

In 2016, Mike Trout won his second MVP award. That made him just the sixth player ever — after Jimmie Foxx, Stan Musial, Hal Newhouser (who won in the talent-starved 1944-45 seasons, with the stars of the game at war), Mickey Mantle and Johnny Bench — to win multiple MVPs through his age-25 season. According to Baseball Reference's Wins Above Replacement metric (WAR), Trout has added more wins to his team's ledger through his age-25 season than all but two players in baseball history (Ty Cobb and Mantle). And here's the twist: Trout's age-25 season will come in 2017.

There's no good, single way to capture the distance between Trout and the rest of the league — indeed, the rest of baseball history. The MVP awards don't do it: Trout has finished second in all three of the full seasons in which he hasn't won the award, and he arguably ought to have won at least two of them. WAR is a framework for estimating value, and it's the best shorthand we have with which to say how good a player is, but there are at least three versions of it, and they don't always agree. And anyway, a large percentage of baseball fans believe it to be esoteric and inscrutable.

No, you have to see Trout play to appreciate his brilliance; his numbers simply help you understand what value that brilliance really has.

He steps into the batter's box as the best player in baseball. Too often, Trout is compared to a linebacker. That's not fair. Nor is he a wide receiver or a shooting guard or an Olympic sprinter. His is a body built for baseball, or rather, his is the body for which baseball was built, like a Vitruvian sketch from the desk of Alexander Cartwright. He sets up with his hands high, behind and a bit above his ear, the product of a swing adjustment he made after winning his first MVP. The start of his swing is a high leg kick, but he's shortened his stride over time, so the kick has become more of a stomp than a slide, and the transfer of his weight and power into his front side at the moment when he puts his foot down is quicker and more balanced than ever.

As he swings, that's what you notice: the power, the quickness and the balance. A great rock drummer can keep four different rhythms with four limbs, all synced to a single, internalized metronome. Trout has that kind of coordination, not merely of movement, but of timing, too. His hands and arms cooperate better than anyone's this side of Hank Aaron. His shoulders rotate perfectly in time and in space, a bit behind his hips. His bat doesn't flash through the strike zone the way many other batters' do — it slices through, fast but under firm control. It used to be true that Trout never fully extended his arms, from the beginning of his swing to the end, but he had to make that change after 2014. He cracked 84 extra-base hits, led the AL in runs and RBIs, and won the MVP award that year, but he struck out in over a quarter of his plate appearances, and the league felt it had figured him out: The great Trout couldn't hit anything up in the zone. He had that hard, short stroke, but the deep dip of his back shoulder and the extreme plane thereof made it impossible for him to reach pitches around or above the letters.

The league might have been right, too. Trout hit .257/.347/.502 over the second half of 2014, not counting his dreadful performance in the Angels' ALDS loss to the Royals. He struck out in 30 percent of his plate appearances over that period.

Tom DiPace

The overall numbers weren't terrible, but by Trout's standards, they were bad, and the strikeout rate warned that they could get worse. Thus, Trout adjusted. He moved his hands way up in his setup, flattened his bat path, and went on destroying big-league pitching.

Then there's that finish, as abbreviated as many batters' are protracted. He follows through with both hands, and then allows his arms to recoil, bringing the bat back to be dropped quickly at his right side. Even as he does so, his feet get moving, and the next thing that makes Trout special makes itself known. His feet are now in play.

Trout has at least 22 infield hits in every full season of his career. His .331 career batting average on ground balls is the best in history for a player with 3,000 or more plate appearances (although we only have the data to split batted-ball results by trajectory going back to 1988) by a healthy margin. That's partially because so many of his grounders are rockets, skipping perhaps once or twice on an inevitable journey to the outfield, but partially, too, because Trout's speed makes him an infield coordinator's worst nightmare. He bats right-handed. He pulls the ball a majority of the time when he hits it on the ground, but not often enough to be reliably neutralized by shifting. Neither the third baseman nor the shortstop can afford to play at their normal depth, maximizing their range and ability to flag down those scalded balls, because if they do, they'll have no hope of throwing out the blazing Trout even on relatively routine grounders.

Once he's on base, Trout doesn't stop running. His three seasons with at least 30 stolen bases and no more than seven times caught stealing are two more than any player in the last century has notched by age 25. Only Carlos Beltran (like Trout, one of the game's all-time greats in high-volume, high-success rate base stealing) and Jarrod Dyson (in the majors almost solely because of his legs) have done it three times in their first six seasons, as Trout has. Trout stole third base 10 times in 2016 — more such thefts than 13 teams had.

On 52.6 percent of singles hit with Trout on first base, he has ended up at third base. (The league average rate of reaching third on singles was 28.6 percent in 2016.) And he's scored on 50.9 percent of the doubles hit with him on first base. (The league's average rate of doing that last year was roughly 40 percent.)

His arm, ever and still his biggest weakness, is no longer an actual weakness. According to Baseball Info Solutions' Defensive Runs Saved, Trout's throwing arm cost the Angels one run in his brief debut in 2011, three in 2012, five in 2013 and six in 2014. Since then, though, he's been average. Fourteen of his 21 career outfield assists have come in the last two seasons.

For a player whose speed and body control (see his dazzling home-run robberies, but don't miss his diving catches, either; Trout has surpassed Brett Gardner as the best in baseball at the full-steam, headlong dive) already made him a fine center fielder, adding the ability to make plays with quick throws is icing on the cake.

A dedication to improvement is perhaps the hardest thing to see when visiting the ballpark and witnessing Trout firsthand, but perhaps also the surest sign of his superiority to everyone else. His extraordinarily patient approach, and the way that lightning-quick swing allowed him to let the ball travel before committing himself to the act, made him a polished big-league hitter much earlier than most players. Even so, his evolution into the hitter with perhaps the best approach in baseball is striking. Last season, Trout set a career high in swing rate at pitches within the strike zone, and a career low in swing rate on pitches outside it. He swung at 50 more first pitches but saw five more 1-0 counts. He trimmed his strikeout rate by attacking more often early in the count, but he still chose his spots superbly. He batted .613 on first pitches put in play in 2016. Trout has become the very model of the modern game's optimal approach: selectively aggressive, able to work counts until he's confident that he'll get a pitch to hit, then eager to do damage when that pitch comes.

There's a new batch of potentially Hall of Fame talent that has already bubbled up since Trout established himself, led by Kris Bryant, Mookie Betts, Corey Seager and Francisco Lindor. Trout doesn't stand as far clear of the field as other players have, at lesser moments in baseball history. He will forever be linked with fellow 2012 rookie phenom Bryce Harper. All of that, along with his absence from most of the postseasons his career has seen so far, threatens to mask Trout's greatness. But perhaps that surprising second MVP is a sign that the baseball world finally realizes what it has.

YOUTH IS SERVED

The numbers below compare Mike Trout through age 24 to the best players in MLB history through the same age.

	Yrs	WAR	R	HR	RBI	BA	OPS+
Mike Trout	**6**	**48.5**	**600**	**168**	**497**	**.306**	**170**
Mickey Mantle	6	40.9	642	173	575	.308	166
Ken Griffey Jr.	6	37.0	518	172	543	.306	149
Hank Aaron	5	29.9	496	140	494	.316	145
Frank Robinson	5	29.7	501	165	449	.297	142

FAB 5

In the last five seasons, since Mike Trout has been a regular in the Angels' lineup, he is responsible for four of the top six seasons and five of the top 12 by any player in baseball over that span in WAR, according to baseball-reference.com.

1.	**Mike Trout, 2012**	**10.8**	7.	Josh Donaldson, 2015	8.8
2.	**Mike Trout, 2016**	**10.5**	8.	Paul Goldschmidt, 2015	8.8
3.	Bryce Harper, 2015	9.9	9.	Carlos Gomez, 2013	8.5
4.	Mookie Betts, 2016	9.6	10.	Robinson Cano, 2012	8.4
5.	**Mike Trout, 2015**	**9.4**	11.	Andrew McCutchen, 2013	8.1
6.	**Mike Trout, 2013**	**9.3**	12.	Mike Trout, 2014	7.9

2007 DRAFT REVISITED

Since Cubs fans specialized in waiting patiently during their 108-year championship drought, it makes sense that the nine years between the 2007 MLB Draft and their magical World Series championship season don't seem like an eternity.

But that draft, while relatively short on big-time talent, especially in the first round, produced three core members of the 2016 cursebusters, even though the team selected none of them in '07. Anthony Rizzo (Boston), Jake Arrieta (Baltimore) and Jason Heyward (Atlanta) all had their names called by other teams that year, but each found his way to the North Side and played a big role in the Cubs' title run.

There were some highlights in the rest of the draft, including David Price, Madison Bumgarner and Mike Moustakas. The Marlins grabbed Giancarlo Stanton in the second round, a pretty good move. But the big story in 2007 was the Cubs' bounty — albeit indirect. It seems fate was preparing Chicago for 2016 almost a decade in advance.

1 RAYS: DAVID PRICE, LHP

Vanderbilt
Tampa Bay ('08-14), Detroit ('14-15), Toronto ('15), Boston ('16)

Although the 2012 Cy Young Award winner has bounced around the American League, that is due more to contract issues than his pitching. Price is a front-line starter who has led the AL in ERA, innings pitched and games started twice and in strikeouts once. In 2012, he posted a 20–5 record with a 2.56 ERA and skinny 1.10 WHIP. He has a career .651 winning percentage and has started at least 30 games in six of the last seven seasons. **All-Star Games:** 5

2. ROYALS: MIKE MOUSTAKAS, SS

Chatsworth (Calif.) HS • Kansas City ('11-16)

A stalwart on the Royals' 2015 World Series championship team, Moustakas moved from short to third before reaching the majors and was the Royals' regular at the position for four seasons before he tore his ACL in May 2016. He had his finest season in '15, when he hit .284, with 22 homers and 82 RBIs — all career highs. In the Royals' World Series win over the Mets, Moustakas hit .304, after driving in five runs during Kansas City's ALCS win. **All-Star Games:** 1

3. CUBS: JOSH VITTERS, 3B

Cypress (Calif.) HS • Chicago Cubs ('12)

Although Vitters was chosen to play in the 2009 Futures Game, his MLB career was a brief one. He spent 36 games with the Cubs in 2012 and hit a meager .121 with a paltry .395 OPS. He spent the 2013 and '14 seasons with the Cubs' AAA Iowa affiliate and hit 11 homers in '13. But he was out of baseball in 2015 before signing with Bridgeport of the Atlantic League in 2016. **All-Star Games:** 0

4. PIRATES: DANIEL MOSKOS, LHP

Clemson • Pittsburgh ('11)

Moskos made steady progress through the Pirates' organization and made it to the majors in 2011, when he went 1–1 with a 2.96 ERA in 31 appearances. He was waived by the Pirates in 2012 and has spent the ensuing seasons in the White Sox, Dodgers and Padres organizations, along with stints in Mexico and China. **All-Star Games:** 0

5. ORIOLES: MATT WIETERS, C

Georgia Tech • Baltimore ('09-16)

Early in his career, Wieters was one of the majors' steadiest backstops, and his 20-plus homers in 2011, '12 and '13 demonstrated his value at the plate, too. But Tommy John surgery curtailed the two-time Gold Glover's appearances in 2014 and '15, and in 2016, he had his worst season (.243/.302/.409), even though he made his fourth All-Star team. **All-Star Games:** 4

6. NATIONALS: ROSS DETWILER, LHP

Missouri State • Washington ('07, '09-14), Texas ('15), Atlanta ('15), Cleveland ('16), Oakland ('16)

After beginning his career as a starter and hitting a high-water mark in 2012 with a 10–8 record, Detwiler moved to the bullpen and has experienced varying degrees of success during his three seasons there. He has worked mostly middle relief and has bounced around the majors the last two years. **All-Star Games**: 0

7. BREWERS: MATT LAPORTA, OF/1B

Florida • Cleveland ('09-12)

LaPorta's four-year majors stint consisted largely of backup outfield and first base work, with some occasional starting assignments. He hit 12 homers for Cleveland in 2010 and 11 the following season. After spending 2013 and '14 as a part-time player in the minors, LaPorta retired at the beginning of the 2015 campaign. **All-Star Games:** 0

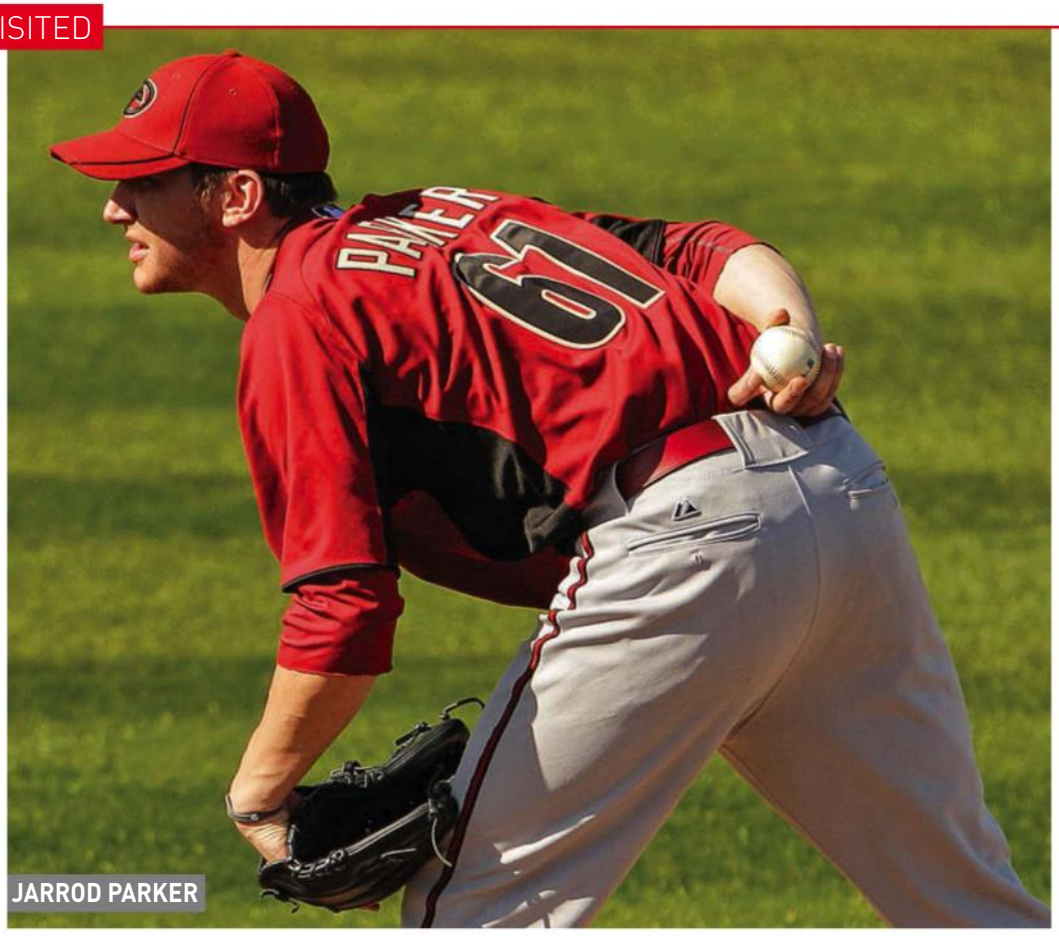
8. ROCKIES: CASEY WEATHERS, RHP

Vanderbilt

The hard-throwing righty's career was put in jeopardy almost from its professional outset, when Weathers underwent Tommy John surgery 16 months after being drafted. He has bounced through four organizations and never advanced higher than AA ball as a reliever. **All-Star Games:** 0

MIKE MOUSTAKAS

All Photos by AP Images


JARROD PARKER

9. DIAMONDBACKS: JARROD PARKER, RHP

Norwell (Ind.) HS • Arizona ('11), Oakland ('12-13)

Parker's story is a sad one indeed. After going a combined 25–16 during the 2012 and '13 seasons with the A's, he was scheduled to be the team's 2014 Opening Day starter, but less than three weeks before the season began, he underwent his second Tommy John surgery and missed that season and all but four games of the next. **All-Star Games:** 0

10. GIANTS: MADISON BUMGARNER, LHP

South Caldwell (N.C.) HS
San Francisco ('09-16)

One of the best pitchers in the game, Bumgarner has won 15 or more games four times in his career and was victorious in 18 twice. Bumgarner is a money pitcher who has an 8–3 postseason record with a 2.11 ERA. His most memorable performance came during the 2014 World Series, when he posted a 2–0 mark with a 0.43 ERA in three games and threw five scoreless innings of relief in the deciding game against Kansas City. **All-Star Games:** 4

11. MARINERS: PHILLIPPE AUMONT, RHP

Ecole secondaire du Versant (Canada)
Philadelphia ('12-15)

Aumont's primary claim to notoriety is his spot in the package of players that Seattle sent to the Phillies for Cliff Lee in 2009. Aumont saw limited action with the Phillies out of the bullpen over parts of four seasons, but after spending all but one game of 2015 and '16 in the minors — with little success — he retired. **All-Star Games:** 0

12. MARLINS: MATT DOMINGUEZ, 3B

Chatsworth (Calif.) HS
Florida ('11), Houston ('12-14), Toronto ('16)

Dominguez has flashed power, with his 21-homer, 77-RBI performance with the Astros in 2013 the apex of his career. Since then, his output has dropped, and since 2014 he has spent most of his time in the minors. Last season, he played five games with the Blue Jays. **All-Star Games:** 0

13. INDIANS: BEAU MILLS, 1B

Lewis-Clark State

Mills lasted five years in professional baseball, but he never reached the majors. He spent parts of two seasons in Class AAA but never proved to be a consistent enough hitter to play big-league ball. In 2012, he retired to raise bulls. **All-Star Games:** 0

14. BRAVES: JASON HEYWARD, OF

Henry County (Ga.) HS
Atlanta ('10-14), St. Louis ('15), Chicago ('16)

The four-time Gold Glover has seen his offensive production decline over the past few seasons, and his .230 average in 2016 was particularly disappointing. But he remains one of the best defensive outfielders in the league and was a fixture on the Cubs' World Series championship team. Heyward smacked 27 homers in 2012 and hit .293 in '15. **All-Star Games:** 1

15. REDS: DEVIN MESORACO, C

Punxsutawney (Pa.) HS • Cincinnati ('11-16)

Mesoraco is one of baseball's more interesting stories of the last few years. Despite spending much of the beginning of the 2014 season on the DL, he ended the season with 25 homers and 80 RBIs and made the NL All-Star team. After the season, he signed a four-year, $28 million deal with the Reds, but hip and shoulder problems limited him to a combined 39 games the next two seasons. **All-Star Games:** 1

16. BLUE JAYS: KEVIN AHRENS, SS/3B

Memorial (Texas) HS

Ahrens spent nine seasons bouncing around the Toronto and Atlanta organizations without ever reaching the majors. He never surpassed the Class AA level and struggled to hit consistently, although he did rap 41 doubles for the Braves' Class A affiliate in Lynchburg in 2014. Ahrens spent 2016 playing for Lancaster of the Independent League. **All-Star Games:** 0

17. RANGERS: BLAKE BEAVAN, RHP

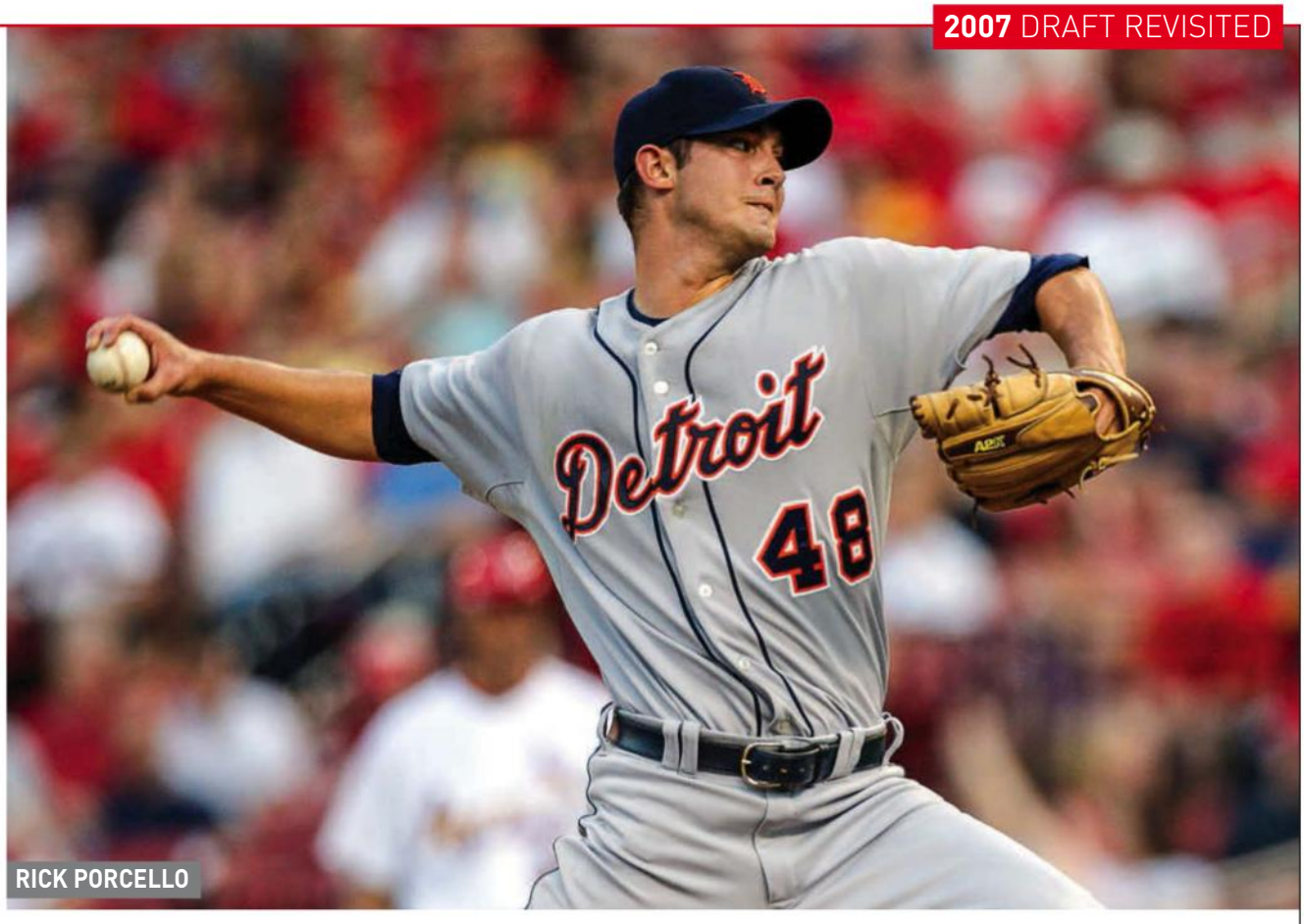
Irving (Texas) HS • Seattle ('11-14)

Beavan showed some talent as a starter and was 11–11 in 152.1 innings for the Mariners in 2012 but was not able to replicate that success in the ensuing seasons. He made a total of 13 starts over the next two seasons and bounced between Seattle's and Arizona's minor-league affiliates and the majors before spending 2016 with Bridgeport of the Atlantic League. **All-Star Games:** 0

18. CARDINALS: PETE KOZMA, SS

Owasso (Okla.) HS • St. Louis ('11-15)

Kozma was the Cards' everyday shortstop in 2013 but hit only .217 for the season. He spent part of 2014 and much of '15 with the club but could never generate enough consistency at the plate. He signed with the Yankees as a free agent in 2016 and spent the season at Class AAA Scranton/Wilkes Barre. **All-Star Games:** 0



RICK PORCELLO

19. PHILLIES: JOE SAVERY, LHP

Rice • Philadelphia ('11-13), Oakland ('14)

After going 16–6 in AA and AAA in 2009, Savery was considered a top prospect. But he struggled as a starter after that and ended up seeing limited action with Philadelphia and the A's for four seasons, primarily as a reliever. He signed with Chicago in November 2014 but was released before the beginning of the season and retired. **All-Star Games:** 0

20. DODGERS: CHRIS WITHROW, RHP

Midland Christian (Texas) HS
Los Angeles ('13-14), Atlanta ('16)

Withrow proved himself to be a solid middle reliever for the Dodgers, before Tommy John surgery derailed him. He was traded to Atlanta but missed the 2015 season. After spending the first part of '16 in the Braves' farm system rehabbing, he pitched in 46 games and posted a 3.58 ERA.
All-Star Games: 0

21. BLUE JAYS: J.P. ARENCIBIA, C

Tennessee
Toronto ('10-13), Texas ('14), Tampa Bay ('15)

Although Arencibia spent three years (2011-13) as the Jays' primary catcher, he never really distinguished himself with the bat and has been primarily a minor-league backstop since. He spent last season in the Rays' farm system. **All-Star Games:** 0

22. GIANTS: TIM ALDERSON, RHP

Horizon (Ariz.) HS

There was actually a point when San Francisco was wondering whether Alderson would be better than Madison Bumgarner. That was back when Alderson was a combined 23–7 in the minors during the 2008-09 campaigns. But Alderson regressed, became a middle reliever, bounced around several organizations and in 2016 was playing for the Sugar Land Skeeters of the Atlantic League.
All-Star Games: 0

23. PADRES: NICK SCHMIDT, LHP

Arkansas

Elbow surgery early in his career may have torpedoed Schmidt's hopes of reaching the majors. He posted a 33–34 record during seven minor-league seasons, and though he reached AAA, he never took the next step. He was out of baseball after the 2014 campaign.
All-Star Games: 0

24. RANGERS: MICHAEL MAIN, RHP

DeLand (Fla.) HS

After struggling on the mound during his first five minor-league seasons but showing some promise at the plate, Main shifted to the outfield, where he found some success at the A and AA levels in 2012 and '13. But he never became a good enough hitter to advance and was out of the game after 2013. **All-Star Games:** 0

25. WHITE SOX: AARON POREDA, LHP

San Francisco • Chicago White Sox ('09), San Diego ('09), Texas ('14)

After beginning his professional career as a starting pitcher, Poreda moved to the bullpen and saw time during two seasons as a middle reliever. In 2014 with Texas, he had a 2–1 record with a 5.91 ERA in 26 appearances. Poreda pitched the last two seasons for the Yomiuri Giants in Japan. **All-Star Games:** 0

26. A'S: JAMES SIMMONS, RHP

UC Riverside

Although Simmons reached AAA ball several times while in the Oakland and Washington organizations, he never made it to the majors. Simmons posted a 39–37 record during eight minor-league seasons and spent 2016 with York of the Atlantic League, going 11–9 with a 4.37 ERA. **All-Star Games:** 0

27. TIGERS: RICK PORCELLO, RHP

Seton Hall (N.J.) Prep
Detroit ('09-14), Boston ('15-16)

For years, Porcello teased Tigers fans with his potential. He had some good seasons in Detroit, including when he went 14–9 in both 2009 and '11, as well as a 15–13 season in 2014. But his ERA was almost always high, and he pitched to contact. He struggled in '15 after being traded to Boston but was great in 2016, winning the Cy Young after going 22–4 with a 3.15 ERA, a career high 189 strikeouts and a career-low 1.009 WHIP. **All-Star Games**: 0

28. TWINS: BEN REVERE, OF

Lexington Catholic (Ky.) HS
Minnesota ('10-12), Philadelphia ('13-15), Toronto ('15), Washington ('16)

Revere has proven himself to be a solid defensive outfielder who can hit for a relatively high average but lacks any kind of power. Revere possesses good speed, although he is known for taking circuitous routes to fly balls at times. His career .285 batting average was hurt by a .217 performance in 2016 with the Nationals. Revere signed with the Angels in the offseason. **All-Star Games:** 0

29. GIANTS: WENDELL FAIRLEY, OF

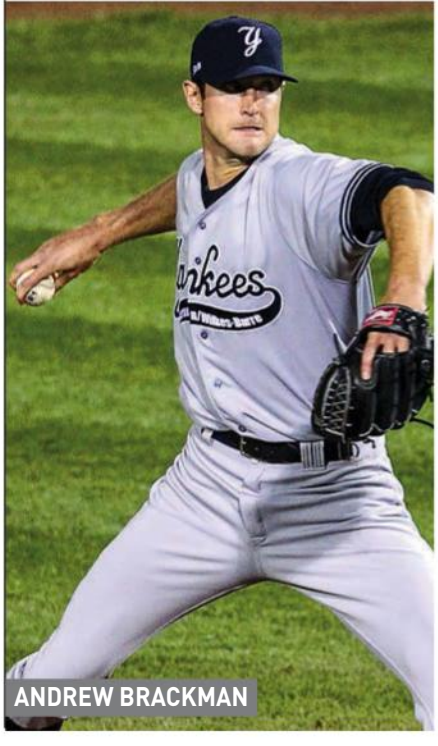
George County (Miss.) HS

Fairley kicked around the Giants' organization for five seasons, never rising above the Class AA level. He showed some ability to hit, but he had no power to speak of. His best year came in 2010, when he hit .292 with 46 RBIs for High-A San Jose. San Francisco released him after the 2012 season.
All-Star Games: 0

30. YANKEES: ANDREW BRACKMAN, RHP

NC State • N.Y. Yankees ('11)

Brackman played basketball and baseball for the Wolfpack but chose to concentrate on the diamond. He spent the large majority of his six-year pro career in the minors, with a three-game stint with the Yanks in 2011 his only MLB experience. Though he allowed only one hit and no runs in 2.1 innings pitched, New York sent him back to the minors. He was out of baseball after the 2013 season.
All-Star Games: 0


ANDREW BRACKMAN

OTHER NOTABLE SELECTIONS

Todd Frazier, SS
Cincinnati (Rd. 1 – Supplemental)
Rutgers
A two-time All-Star with the Reds, Frazier was part of a three-team deal in December 2015 that sent him to the White Sox, for whom he slugged a career-high 40 homers and drove in 98 runs.

Brett Cecil, LHP
Toronto (Rd. 1 – Supplemental)
Maryland
Cecil has made the switch from starter to middle reliever for the Jays and has become a workhorse, appearing in 60 or more games three times. He was an All-Star in 2013, when he went 5–1 and struck out 70 in 60.2 innings. He signed with St. Louis this offseason.

Sean Doolittle, 1B
Oakland (Rd. 1 – Supplemental)
Virginia
Although drafted as a position player, Doolittle has switched to relief pitching for the A's and has been a powerful part of the bullpen. In 2014, he was named to the AL All-Star team and saved 22 games.

Josh Donaldson, C
Chicago Cubs (Rd. 1 – Supplemental
Auburn
Now a third baseman, Donaldson has been one of the majors' biggest power sources. A three-time All-Star for the A's and Toronto, he slugged 41 homers and led the MLB with 123 RBIs in 2015 and hit 37 and drove in 99 in '16.

Jordan Zimmermann, RHP
Washington (Rd. 2)
Wisconsin Stevens Point
The two-time All-Star won 19 games for the Nats in 2013 and was 14–5 the next season. He has a career 79–57 record and signed a five-year deal with Detroit before the '16 season and went 9–7.

Giancarlo Stanton, OF
Florida (Rd. 2)
Notre Dame (Calif.) HS
One of baseball's most feared sluggers, Stanton signed a gigantic 13-year, $325 million contract in 2014. He led the NL in homers that year with 37 and despite battling injuries the last few seasons is a three-time All-Star with five seasons of at least 27 dingers.

Freddie Freeman, 1B
Atlanta (Rd. 2)
El Modina (Calif.) HS
A two-time All-Star, Freeman had his finest power season in 2016, when he hit 34 homers and drove in 91. His OPS of .968 was a career high, as were his 102 runs scored.

Jonathan Lucroy, C
Milwaukee (Rd. 3)
Louisiana-Lafayette
Even though Lucroy has played in two All-Star Games, Milwaukee traded him to Texas during the 2016 season as part of a rebuilding project. Lucroy finished fourth in the 2014 MVP balloting after hitting .301 with a majors-best 53 doubles.

Jake Arrieta, RHP
Baltimore (Rd. 5)
TCU
Arrieta went 10–8 for the O's in 2011, but he struggled the next season-plus, and Baltimore dished him to the Cubs. He won the 2015 Cy Young Award with a 22–6 record and went 18–8 for the World Champions in '16.

Anthony Rizzo, 1B
Boston (Rd. 6)
Stoneman-Douglas (Fla.) HS
It's hard to believe both Boston and San Diego traded Rizzo, who hit 95 homers in three seasons and led the Cubs to the 2016 World Series title. They did, and Chicago is thankful.

Lucas Duda, 1B
N.Y. Mets (Rd. 7)
USC
Although a stress fracture in his lower back limited Duda to just 47 games in 2016, he had been a big producer the two previous seasons, slugging 30 and 27 homers and topping .825 in OPS both years.

Matt Moore, LHP
Tampa (Rd. 8)
Moriarty (N.M.) HS
Moore was 17–4 during an All-Star season for Tampa Bay in 2013, but Tommy John surgery limited him to just 14 starts in 2014-15. He was traded to San Francisco during the 2016 season and finished with a 13–12 record.

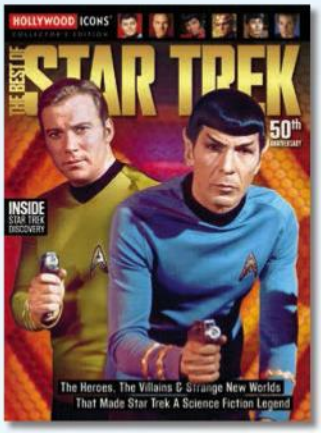
Greg Holland, RHP
Kansas City (Rd. 10)
Western Carolina
In the 2013-14 seasons, Holland was one of the majors' most imposing relievers, posting a 1.32 ERA and saving a total of 93 games. But he struggled in 2015, thanks to a torn elbow ligament, and underwent Tommy John surgery, forcing him to miss 2016 and lose his spot on the KC roster.

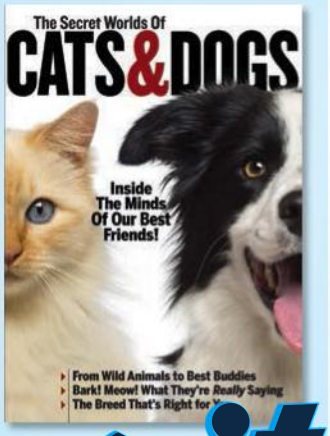
Stephen Vogt, OF
Tampa (Rd. 12)
Azusa Pacific
It took until 2012 for Vogt to reach the majors, and it wasn't until the A's purchased him from Tampa Bay that he started to produce consistently. He has been at his best the last two seasons and has been an All-Star both years.

Mitch Moreland, 1B
Texas (Rd. 17)
Mississippi State
Moreland has been a steady power source for the Rangers, topping 20 homers three times and knocking in 85 in 2015. Last season, he won his first Gold Glove.

ATHLON MEDIA GROUP AMG Parade

SAVE BIG ON ALL YOUR


HOLLYWOOD ICONS
THE BEST OF STAR TREK
50th ANNIVERSARY
INSIDE STAR TREK DISCOVERY
The Heroes, The Villains & Strange New Worlds That Made Star Trek A Science Fiction Legend


The Secret Worlds Of
CATS & DOGS
Inside The Minds Of Our Best Friends!
From Wild Animals to Best Buddies
Bark! Meow! What They're Really Saying
The Breed That's Right for

Natural Health for the Whole Family...Pets, Too!
Herbal Remedies
Top 100 Healing Herbs
Proven Recipes for Better Health
Prevent Colds & Flu
Curb Cravings, Burn Fat
Beat Stress & Insomnia
STOP MEMORY LOSS NOW! PAGE 6

favorite magazines

VISIT AMGLIFESTYLESTORE.COM

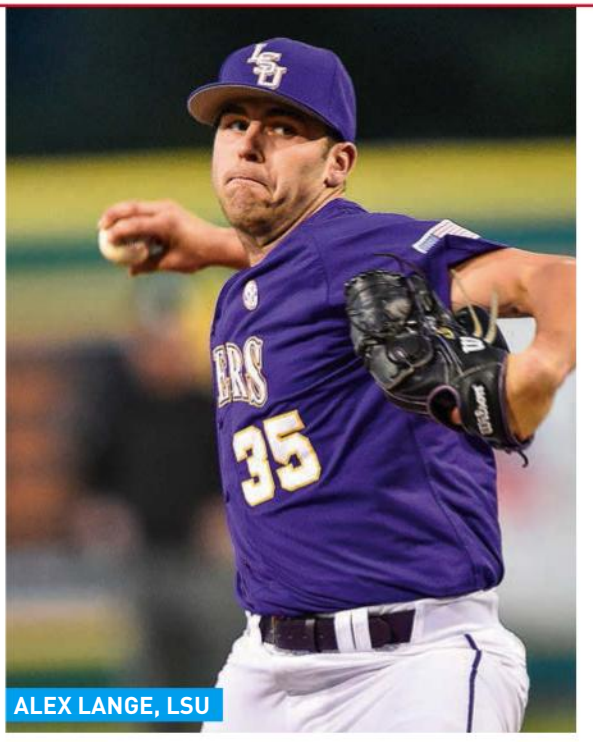
COLLEGE BASEBALL PRESEASON TOP 25

BY ERIC SORENSON

TCU'S EVAN SKOUG & LUKEN BAKER

1. TCU (49–18, 15–9 BIG 12)

It's good to be Jim Schlossnagle right now. The Horned Frogs maestro has a team stacked with talent that should get back to Omaha. Eight starters return, including 3B Elliott Barzilli (.339-7-48), C Evan Skoug (.301-9-51), the double-play duo of 2B Cam Warner (.300-6-43) and SS Ryan Merrill (.298, 11SBs) and hulking DH Luken Baker (.379-11-62). The pitching staff returns 55 of 67 starts from last year and also gets incoming LHP Nick Lodolo, who was a first-round draft pick last June.


ALEX LANGE, LSU

2. LSU (45–21, 19–11 SEC)
The experienced Tigers are looking to make amends for a Super Regional collapse against Coastal Carolina last June. SS Kramer Robertson (.324), 2B Cole Freeman (.329) and 1B Greg Deichmann (.288-11-57) all return despite getting drafted last summer. Alex Lange (8–4, 3.79) could be the top pitcher in the country, and LHP Jared Poche (9–4, 3.35) turned down the Padres as a 14th-round draftee. Expect big things from freshman flingers Hunter Kiel and Zack Hess, who were part of another top-10 recruiting class.

3. FLORIDA STATE (41–22, 16–10 ACC)
Every year we ask, "Is this the year for the Seminoles?" And yes, indeed, this could be. Mike Martin has a full arsenal of arms back, including LHP Tyler Holton (3–4, 2.79) and RHPs Drew Carlton (8–3, 3.94) and Cole Sands (6–7, 4.13) who combined for 44 starts a year ago. SS Taylor Walls (.355-6-46) is a dynamic team leader and Brooks Wallace Award candidate, while Cal Raleigh (.301) and Dylan Busby (.323) combined for 24 HRs and 105 RBIs. Freshman 1B Drew Mendoza is a sure-fire future All-American.

4. TEXAS TECH (47–20, 19–5 BIG 12)
Remember all the talk about the freshman-heavy arms that pitched the Raiders to Omaha? Well, those greenhorns are a year wiser and better now as Davis Martin (10–1, 2.52), Steven Gingery (4–2, 3.18), Ryan Shetter (4–2, 4.02) and Erikson Lanning (3–4, 5.02) enter Year 2 in Lubbock. There were some big losses in the batting order, but top bat Tanner Gardner (.379) and the middle infield of Orlando Garcia (.265) and Michael Davis (.268) should be outstanding. Freshman OF John McMillon is going to be a star soon.

5. CAL STATE FULLERTON (36–23, 17–7 BIG WEST)
As you know, when the Titans have dominating arms, they have Omaha contention written all over them. All-America candidates LHP John Gavin (6–3, 2.09), RHP Colton Eastman (8–3, 2.24) and RHP Connor Seabold (7–6, 2.48) helped hold opposing batters to a .212 average. Yikes. A ton of experience is back in the field with SS Timmy Richards (.280-9-31), who was an 18th-round draftee last June, C Chris Hudgins (.220) and 3B Taylor Bryant (redshirt). Incoming 2B Dillon Persinger and OF Chris Prescott have MLB tools.

6. VANDERBILT (43–19, 18–12 SEC)
The Commodores are hoping for smoother seas for 2017 thanks to returnees such as starting pitchers Kyle Wright (8–4, 3.09) and Patrick Raby (7–1, 2.61) plus relievers Matt Ruppenthal (5–1, 2.33) and Collin Snider (4–0, 2.57), all righties. OF Jeren Kendall (.332-9-59) spent last summer with Team USA and figures to be a top-5 pick in the 2017 draft. Look for INF Will Toffey (.227) to bounce back and provide some punch in the middle of the lineup. The 11th-ranked incoming class will fill some holes to keep the machine chugging along.

7. CLEMSON (44–20, 16–14 ACC)
The Tigers have a pair of legit All Americans in lumberjack slugger Seth Beer (.370-18-70) and versatile LHP Pat Krall (10-2, 1.67). OF Chase Pinder (.295-11-46) and Presbyterian transfer OF Weston Jackson (third-team All American in 2016) will lead a potent offense. Six of the top seven pitchers return, including Alex Eubanks (6–5, 4.09) and Charlie Barnes (6–4, 4.66), who combined for 27 starts a year ago.

8. COASTAL CAROLINA (55–18, 21–3 BIG SOUTH)
Our national champions aren't going away anytime soon. Nearly the entire arms corps returns, as the Friday-Saturday combo of Andrew Beckwith (15–1, 1.85) and Alex Cunningham (10–4, 3.62) are joined by mid-90s RHPs Jason Bilous (3–1, 4.43) and Bobby Holmes (7–2, 4.20) as CWS vets who thrive in pressure situations. The rebuilt order has CF Billy Cooke (.324, 27 SBs) and 3B Seth Lancaster (.326, 15 SBs) as leaders, while SS Jordan Gore and 2B Wood Myers are transfers from South Carolina and North Carolina, respectively, who will be studs.

9. FLORIDA (52–16, 19–10 SEC)
The Gators lost a lot off the 2016 squad, but as a testament to the talent that coach Kevin O'Sullivan has brought in the last few years, they are still a top-10 squad. Alex Faedo (13–3, 3.18), SS Dalton Guthrie (.305), 3B Jonathan India (.303, 13 SBs) and DH JJ Schwarz (.290-7-60) are the next line of All-America types, and sophomore RHPs Jackson Kowar (3–0, 3.37) and Brady Singer (2–2, 4.95) will move from the bullpen to the weekend rotation and will probably excel. It's in their DNA.

10. UCSB (43–20–1, 13–11 BIG WEST)
Though they'll miss staff ace Shane Bieber, the miracle beach boys have Joe Record (6–5, 3.91) and Noah Davis (7–4, 4.46) returning to their weekend posts, and relief ace Kyle Nelson (10 saves) heads up a deep bullpen. The middle infield of SS Clay Fisher (.285, 14 SBs) and 2B J.J. Muno (.294, 17 SBs) could be the nation's best, and 1B Austin Bush (11 HRs) adds some thump. Freshman pitchers Chris Lincoln (13th round), Ben Brecht (36th round) and Jack Dashwood (Area Code Games alum) will contribute right away.

11. OREGON STATE (35–19, 16–14 PAC-12)
Hard to believe the Beavers sat at home last June, but worry not — they'll make amends this time around. OSU will feature LHP Luke Heimlich (7–4, 3.53) and RHP Bryce Fehmel (10–1, 2.31), who are absolute studs. They'll have LHP Max Engelbrekt (11 saves) to lock down late leads. Sophomore middle infielders Nick Madrigal (.333) and Cadyn Grenier (.240) are former 17th- and 21st-round draft picks, respectively. Expect a big season from 1B K.J. Harrison, who hit only .265 but spent last summer with Team USA.

12. ARIZONA (49–24, 16–14 PAC-12)
Jay Johnson and his staff pulled the Cats to within a two-RBI single of winning it all last year. They'll get LHP JC Cloney (8–4, 2.45) back plus LHP Cameron Ming (3–3, 3.59) and RHP Cody Deason (1–2, 3.73), who had great fall camps. 1B JJ Matijevic (.287) and C Cesar Salazar (.276) return, plus the recruiting class was ranked No. 4 nationally and features transfers in OF Cal Stevenson (.359 at Nevada), 1B Cory Voss (.346 at New Mexico) and 6'8" hurler Tylor Megill (6-3, 3.95 at LMU), all former Freshman All-Americans.

13. SOUTH CAROLINA (46–18, 20–9 SEC)
The Gamecocks have seven position players and five of their top six pitchers back in the fold for this year's run to Omaha. In the rotation, Clarke Schmidt (9–5, 3.40) and Adam Hill (7–0, 3.53) return, plus Wil Crowe

Skoug, Baker: TCU Athletics; Lange: LSU Athletics

TRISTAN BECK, STANFORD

COLBY BORTLES, OLE MISS

is back from TJ surgery and is hitting mid-90s again. Closer Tyler Johnson (nine saves) pitched for Team USA last summer, and Josh Reagan (11 saves) also returns. USC lost some firepower, but OFs Alex Destino (.321-10-59) and TJ Hopkins (.322) are mainstays to build around.

14. MIAMI (50–14, 21–7 ACC)
As usual, this is Miami, so Omaha is always a possibility. Two big studs will lead the arms corps in RHP Jesse Lepore (9–0, 2.20) and LHP Michael Mediavilla (11–2, 3.40). Losing saves ace Bryan Garcia is tough, but RHP Frankie Bartow (6–0, 2.72) had 43 appearances. Offensively, Carl Chester (.336) is one of the best leadoff guys in the country, and Johnny Ruiz (.342) and Randy Batista (.272) are stout middle infielders. JC transfers James Davidson and Hunter Tackett will be high-impact outfielders.

15. STANFORD (31–23, 15–15 PAC-12)
It's one final go-round for head coach Mark Marquess, who has 1,585 career wins. The Cardinal led the nation in defense (.983), and four-fifths of the infield is back to defend its fielding crown. The team ERA was 3.17, and the weekend rotation of Tristan Beck (4–5, 2.03), Chris Castellanos (8–2, 3.41) and Brett Hanewich (3–2, 3.92) returns intact. Plus, Tyler Thorne and Colton Hock are back to lock down late leads. The .252 team average just won't do, so improving that is the make-or-break factor this year.

16. LOUISIANA (43–21, 21–9 SUN BELT)
This should be a fun team to watch in 2017 as every pitcher of note returns, including LHP Gunner Leger (7–3, 2.26) and RHPs Nick Lee (7–1, 3.31), Evan Guillory (5–6, 4.34) and Wyatt Marks (5–7, 4.50), who accounted for 62 of the 64 starts last season. 3B Alex Pinero (.312, 25 SBs) and CF Joe Robbins (.286-10-37) lead a group of seven starters back. Catcher Handsome Monica and 1B Tyler Stover have both been drafted and played at Arizona and Kansas State, respectively, as freshmen.

17. VIRGINIA (38–22, 19–11 ACC)
As you know, you should never doubt coach Brian O'Connor and his staff, especially when they've got tons of pitching back. Ace Connor Jones is gone, but LHP Adam Haseley (9–3, 1.73, also .304 as CF) and RHPs Tommy Doyle (2–7, 5.06), Alec Bettinger (3–5, 5.43, seven saves) and Tyler Shambora (5–1, 3.22) are all old war horses. Robbie Coman returns to catch after missing 2016, and 1B Pavin Smith (.329-8-57), 2B Ernie Clement (.351) and SS Justin Novak (.273) will make for a solid defense.

18. OLE MISS (43–19, 18–12 SEC)
Although there is a good nucleus returning for the Rebels, the future is even brighter as they have brought in the top-ranked recruiting class in the country. Five incoming players were MLB draftees last summer, led by SS Grae Kessinger, C Cooper Johnson and LHP Ryan Rolison. Of the returnees, RHP James McArthur (6–1, 4.26), LHP David Parkinson (5–3, 2.78) and RHP Will Stokes (2–1, 2.93, seven saves) will lead the pitching staff, and 2B Tate Blackman (.322) and 3B Colby Bortles (.270-8-50) will be building blocks for the order.

19. OKLAHOMA STATE (43–22, 16–8 BIG 12)
Last year, Josh Holliday guided the Cowboys back to Omaha for the first time in 17 years. Now they're hungry for back-to-back trips. Both Tyler Buffett (9–3, 2.81) and Trey Cobb (4–7, 3.09) spurned the pros for one more season and will join RHP Jensen Elliott (9–3, 3.50) to form a great core group. The offense will need some re-tooling, but 3B Garrett Benge (.292), 1B Dustin Williams (14 HRs) and OF Garrett McCain (11 SBs in limited role) will help ratchet up the hit parade.

20. NORTH CAROLINA (34–21, 13–17 ACC)
Oh man, the Tar Heels are steaming after missing the postseason last year. Weekenders J.B. Bukauskas (7–2, 3.10) and Jason Morgan (3–3, 4.10) lead a deep staff with a lot of promise. Eight regulars are back in the field, including top bats in OF Brian Miller (.345, 21 SBs) and SS Logan Warmoth (.337), plus mercurial OF Adam Pate (.285, 17 SBs). A top-5 recruiting class features RHPs Luca Dalatri and Austin Bergner and C Brandon Martorano, who all turned down serious overtures from the MLB draft.

21. MISSISSIPPI STATE (44–18–1, 21–9 SEC)
There was lots of change in Starkville this offseason, most notably John Cohen's move to AD and former LSU assistant Andy Cannizaro's move to Mississippi State's head coach. State also had 11 players drafted off last year's team. But All-American Jake Mangum (.408), All-SEC OF Brent Rooker (.324-11-54) and three-year starting SS Ryan Gridley (.284) form a great nucleus. The pitching staff will need to be overhauled due to attrition, but there are some promising recruits, led by 12th-round draftee RHP Graham Ashcraft and Junior College All-America RHP Peyton Plumlee.

22. NEBRASKA (37–22, 16–8 BIG 10)
A ton of experience is back for the Big Red in 2017. Nearly every pitcher of note returns, led by weekend starters Matt Waldron (7–3, 2.87) and Derek Burkamper (6–3, 3.09). Also, Nebraska has one of the top two-way players in the country in Jake Meyers, who went 6–1 on the mound and hit .326 at the plate. Elsewhere, RHPs Chad Luensmann (13 saves) and Reece Eddins (4–3, 1.85) are ace bullpenners, and 1B Scott Schreiber (.325-16-55) and DH Ben Miller (.317-6-46) are power-jacks at the dish.

Beck: Stanford Athletics; Bortles: Ole Miss Athletics; Hannah: Dallas Baptist University Athletics; Kendall: Vanderbilt Athletics; Beer: Clemson Athletics

23. LOUISVILLE (50–14, 22–8 ACC)
Golden Spikes Award candidate Brendan McKay (.333-6-41 and 12–4, 2.30) will be joined by fellow 12-game winner Kade McClure and reliever Shane Hummel (2–1, 1.99) to rebuild the mound corps. All-ACC SS Devin Hairston (.361) will be joined by 3B Drew Ellis (.309) and 2B Devin Mann (.303) to form a sound defensive infield, and OFs Logan Taylor (.280, 18 SBs) and Colin Lyman (.301, nine SBs) are flyers.

24. TEXAS (25–32, 10–14 BIG 12)
David Pierce takes over for the legendary Augie Garrido, and he inherits a full cupboard in Austin. The pitching staff was all freshmen and sophomores last year, and RHPs Kyle Johnston (3–2, 3.72) and Morgan Cooper (3–5, 4.03) could be high-round picks in June's draft. Seven regulars return to the lineup, led by 1B Kacy Clemens (.303-5-31), 2B Zane Gurwitz (.295-5-36) and 3B Bret Boswell (.241). The banner recruiting class will provide quality depth.

25. NC STATE (38–22, 15–13 ACC)
Six regulars return to the batting order, and all six hit .296 or better, led by 3B Evan Mendoza's .362 and OF Brock Deatherage's .319. Middle infielders Joe Dunand (.297-4-41) and Stephen Pitarra (.291) are steady gloves with range. Pitching-wise, there are plenty of options on a deep staff, especially with LHP Brian Brown (7–3, 3.70) starting Fridays and if Joe O'Donnell (3–2, 4.06) can stay healthy.

10 TO WATCH

JAMESON HANNAH, DALLAS BAPTIST

ARIZONA STATE Lots of youth, but a top-five recruiting class in the country shows that coach Tracy Smith has the Devils on the way up.

BYU The Cougars will be one of the more experienced teams in the country and return seven regulars who hit .300-plus.

DALLAS BAPTIST The Patriots will have one of the best defenses and an electrifying center fielder in Jameson Hannah. If incoming recruits live up to billing, look out.

EAST CAROLINA The Pirates are still stalking Omaha and feature OF Dwanya Williams-Sutton, who led the American Athletic Conference with a .360 average as a freshman.

INDIANA STATE Three weekend starters and the core of the fifth-best defense in the country (.980 fielding) should carry the Sycamores a long way.

NEW MEXICO The Lobos will be able to post some big numbers on anyone. 3B Carl Stajduhar (.331-18-66) is one of the better sluggers in the country.

RICE This tight-knit team took a trip to Cuba over Thanksgiving. If some of the lockdown relievers can acclimate to the weekend rotation, the Owls will be dangerous.

SAINT MARY'S Lefties Corbin Burnes (9–2, 2.46) and Johnny York (7–5, 3.25) form one of the best Friday-Saturday combos in the West.

TEXAS A&M The Aggies lost 13 players to the MLB draft, so this is a rebuilding year. But having a Friday ace like Brigham Hill (9–2, 2.51) will help.

TULANE LHP Ross Massey (10–3, 2.29) and RHP J.P. France (6–4, 3.33) are a great one-two punch, but the senior-dominated offense needs to hit better than .264.

JEREN KENDALL, VANDERBILT

SETH BEER, CLEMSON

THE ALL-AMERICA TEAM

C	Evan Skoug, TCU
1B	K.J. Harrison, Oregon State
2B	Ernie Clement, Virginia
SS	Taylor Walls, Florida State
3B	Jake Burger, Missouri State
OF	Jeren Kendall, Vanderbilt
OF	Jake Mangum, Mississippi State
OF	Keston Hiura, UC Irvine
OF	Seth Beer, Clemson
DH	Luken Baker, TCU
UTL	Brendan McKay, Louisville
SP	Andrew Beckwith, Coastal Carolina
SP	Seth Romero, Houston
SP	Alex Lange, LSU
RP	Glenn Otto, Rice
RP	Pat Krall, Clemson

HUNTER GREENE

'17 DRAFT PROSPECTS

Top 40 High School Prospects

1. Hunter Greene, SS/RHP, Sherman Oaks, Calif.
Greene is an athletic right-handed pitcher with some of the easiest 95-mph velocity scouts have seen. But he's also a legitimate first-round pick as a shortstop. His range and foot speed aren't ideal for the position, but he has great hands and an outstanding arm.

2. Royce Lewis, OF, San Juan Capistrano, Calif.
As impressive as Greene is, there are scouts who believe Lewis is the top high school player in the class. He's shown impressive hitting ability to go with excellent athleticism. He's also played some shortstop.

3. D.L. Hall, LHP, Valdosta, Ga.
Hall is an impressive athlete who also has been a productive basketball player. His athleticism is apparent on the mound as well. With a potentially plus curveball to go with a 94-mph fastball, Hall is a possible top-5 pick.

4. Hans Crouse, RHP, Dana Point, Calif.
Crouse has some of the best pure arm strength in the prep ranks with a fastball that touches 97 mph on his best days. He has also shown the ability to spin a hard-breaking curveball.

5. Jo Adell, OF/RHP, Louisville, Ky.
Few prominent members of the draft class improved more over the summer showcase circuit than Adell. At the start of the summer, Adell looked lost at the plate at USA Baseball's Tournament of Stars. By the end, he was putting together much better at-bats and was starting to let his athleticism play more.

6. Calvin Mitchell, OF, San Diego, Calif.
Mitchell is one of the safest high school bats in the 2017 draft class. There are very few doubts about his ability to put the bat on the ball, although he has less upside than some of the other top prep prospects.

7. Blayne Enlow, RHP, St. Amant, La.
Enlow is yet another of a very strong group of hard-throwing righthanders with plenty of velocity and the ability to break off a quality breaking ball. His curveball is one of the best in the draft class.

8. Cole Brannen, OF, Perry, Ga.
Brannen turned in some of the fastest running times of the prep class, but he's also shown some left-handed pop as well, giving him a chance to be a valuable power/speed outfielder who can play center or right field.

9. Jacob Heatherly, LHP, Cullman, Ala.
Heatherly already pitches with a low-90s fastball, but with his broad shoulders and smooth delivery, there may be a little more in there. His curveball isn't all that consistent, but at its best, it's quite good.

10. Quentin Holmes, OF, East Elmhurst, N.Y.
Any team needing a great glove in center field should take a look at Holmes. He's a speedster who can track down balls in the gaps in center field. His infectious exuberance on the field also impresses scouts.

11. Trevor Rogers, LHP, Carlsbad, N.M.
A cousin of former big-league outfielder Cody Ross, Rogers is a massive (6'6") lefthander with the 95-mph fastball to match his size.

12. Nick Allen, SS, San Diego, Calif.
Allen is one of the best defensive shortstops in the 2017 draft class. He's a line-drive hitter without much power, but his glove gives him a chance to stay at shortstop as a pro.

13. Mark Vientos, SS/3B, Plantation, Fla.
Vientos, who is committed to play at Miami (Fla.), is one of the most physical hitters in the upcoming draft class. He has plenty of bat speed and power potential and the frame to get even bigger.

14. Brady McConnell, SS, Merritt Island, Fla.
Over the summer, McConnell proved to be one of the most consistent hitters around, hitting line drive after line drive against quality pitching. The Florida commit also showed a consistent glove at shortstop.

BRADY MCCONNELL

AP Images

15. Nick Storz, RHP, Brooklyn, N.Y.
Storz looks like he made a mistake and walked onto the diamond when he was supposed to be headed to the football field. The massive righthander has a 94-mph fastball but needs to learn to control it better.

16. Adam Hall, SS/2B, London, Ont.
Hall likely will have to move from shortstop in pro ball, although he's good enough with the glove to play shortstop for the Aggies if he makes it to Texas A&M. He's shown the bat to be a top-of-the-order hitter as well.

17. Kyle Hurt, RHP, San Diego, Calif.
The best is likely yet to come for Hurt, but the righthander already has some of his man strength, and he has three promising pitches.

18. Jeremiah Estrada, RHP, Palm Desert, Calif.
There's so much velocity in the game that it's easy to get jaded, but Estrada's 91-95 mph fastball deserves notice, especially as the UCLA commit has shown signs of commanding it better and better.

19. Garrett Mitchell, OF, Orange, Calif.
Mitchell has the building blocks to be an impact outfielder as his pull-heavy approach gives him excellent power (at the expense of plate coverage), and he's a speedster in the outfield with a right fielder's arm.

20. M.J. Melendez, C, Palmetto Bay, Fla.
Melendez is the son of Florida International head coach Mervyl Melendez. As you would expect for a coach's son, he has an excellent understanding of the game. He also has shown a very strong arm behind the plate and an improved swing.

21. Heliot Ramos, OF, Guaynabo, P.R.
Ramos was the star of the Under Armour game at Wrigley Field last summer. He's a right fielder with the arm and the power potential for the position, but his ability to make consistent contact will be tested in pro ball.

22. Alex Scherff, RHP, Colleyville, Texas
Scherff hasn't always been consistent, but at his best he looks like a potential ace with a 95-plus mph fastball and the feel for spinning a breaking ball and locating a changeup.

23. Jake Eder, LHP, Delray Beach, Fla.
Eder may be a tough player to sign out of high school as he's committed to Vanderbilt, but the lefty has a pro body at 6'4", 215 pounds and pro stuff with an 88-91 mph fastball and quality curveball.

24. Shane Baz, RHP/3B, Tomball, Texas
Baz has been a two-way player in high school and on the showcase circuit, but he has more potential on the mound as a pro. His slider is advanced for his age, and his low-90s fastball has present velocity.

25. Mitchell Stone, LHP, Edmond, Okla.
Stone is one of the tallest high school pitchers scouts have ever seen. At 6'10", 250 pounds, he has massive length to go with an 88-92 mph fastball. He shows better control than can be expected from such a long-levered pitcher.

NICK STORZ

26. Hagen Danner, RHP/C, Huntington Beach, Calif.
As a long-time contributor for one of the best high school programs in the country (Huntington Beach HS), Danner has been a name on the scouting circuit for several years, both as a catcher and as a pitcher.

27. Nick Pratto, LHP/1B, Huntington Beach, Calif.
Pratto and Danner will likely ensure that Huntington Beach will rank among the nation's best high school teams again this year. Pratto is a first baseman with the power expected from the position.

28. Chris McMahon, RHP, West Chester, Pa.
As a colder-weather fresh arm who already lights up radar guns with a low-90s fastball, McMahon is a must-follow for teams this spring.

29. Cole Turney, OF, Richmond, Texas
Turney's power is something to behold. The left-handed hitter showed his ability to drive the ball 400-plus feet, although he may have to clean up his swing a little to be a better hitter.

30. Conner Uselton, OF, Moore, Okla.
Uselton's swing isn't always pretty, but it does the job, and he has a very lengthy track record, as he was one of the most prominent underclassmen on the showcase circuit in 2014 and '15.

31. Drew Waters, OF, Woodstock, Ga.
A switch-hitter whose left-handed swing is built to make contact, Waters looks to drive the ball from the right side. His arm makes him a likely future right fielder.

32. Sam Carlson, RHP/OF, Burnsville, Minn.
One of the contributors to USA Baseball's 18U team that won the Pan American AAA Championship, Carlson is a legitimate option both on the mound and at the plate. He's a quality defender with an above-average arm in the outfield.

33. Tim Elko, 1B, Tampa, Fla.
Elko is going to have to hit as a prep first baseman, but that's exactly what he does. He consistently connected against 90-plus-mph fastballs last summer and should be expected to do the same this spring.

34. Steven Williams, C/OF, Albany, Ga.
Williams has some of the best left-handed power in a class loaded with lefty power hitters. The Auburn signee consistently drove the ball all summer.

35. Wilberto Rivera, RHP, Florida, P.R.
Rivera has outstanding arm speed and has touched 97 mph with his fastball, but he does need to smooth out his delivery.

36. Brandon McCabe, RHP, West Palm Beach, Fla.
When McCabe lets loose his fastball, it often comes with a very audible grunt. But he is bringing the heat when he brings the noise — he'll sit 91-94 mph at his best.

37. Jordan Anderson, OF, Madison, Ala.
Anderson is very much a work in progress. His speed is exceptional, and his bat speed (which is already good) should improve as he fills out. His swing is still raw, as he's got plenty of polish to add.

38. MacKenzie Gore, LHP, Whiteville, N.C.
Gore, who signed to play at East Carolina, has an excellent advanced arsenal of pitches to go with enough (87-91 mph) velocity to be a potential early-round pick.

39. Jacob Pearson, OF, West Monroe, La.
Pearson is one of the best pure hitters scouts saw last summer. In addition, he is an above-average runner.

40. Tanner Burns, RHP, Decatur, Ala.
Burns is an athletic righthander with an excellent breaking ball and a low-90s fastball. His delivery does make it hard for him to locate consistently. That will need to be cleaned up.

ALEX FAEDO

Top 40 College Prospects

1. Alex Faedo, RHP, Florida
A.J. Puk was a first-round pick of the A's last year, but Faedo outpitched him in the Gators' rotation. Faedo is a righthander with a nearly ideal frame (6'5", 220 pounds) and an excellent fastball/slider one-two combo. If he can improve his changeup, he could be the No. 1 pick in the draft.

2. Jeren Kendall, OF, Vanderbilt
Kendall didn't get to play center field at Vanderbilt in his first two college seasons because of 2016 second-round pick Bryan Reynolds, but he's the best college center field prospect in the upcoming draft class. He has great speed with plenty of offensive potential as well, although he's going to have to show better contact ability.

3. Kyle Wright, RHP, Vanderbilt
Vanderbilt has had five pitchers taken in the first or supplemental first round since 2011. Wright will almost assuredly be the sixth thanks to his 90-94-mph fastball. He's already shown the ability to manipulate his fastball, cutting it and sinking it, and his curveball shows plenty of promise.

4. J.B. Bukauskas, RHP, North Carolina
The success of Sonny Gray, Johnny Cueto and Marcus Stroman has helped paved the way for Bukauskas, another short righthander. The 6-footer has three quality pitches, but it's his devastating slider that helped him pile up nearly 13 strikeouts per nine innings as a sophomore.

5. Brendan McKay, LHP/1B, Louisville
It's hard to imagine a team passing on his pitching potential — he's a lefty who can spot his fastball and finish off hitters with an above-average curveball — but McKay is also one of Louisville's best hitters.

6. Tanner Houck, RHP, Missouri
Houck has successfully dominated with power in his first two years at Missouri. Now he's working on becoming a more refined pitcher. Houck is a ground-ball machine at his best, but he needs to improve his changeup this spring.

7. Tristan Beck, RHP, Stanford
Beck and Colton Hock will team up to give Stanford one of the best weekend rotations in college baseball this year. Beck is a draft-eligible sophomore, so he will have some additional financial leverage come draft time because he has two remaining years of college eligibility.

8. Alex Lange, RHP, LSU
In his first two seasons at LSU, Lange has twice ranked among the top 10 in Division I in strikeouts. There's some debate whether Lange will fit better long term as a pro as a hard-throwing closer or as an innings-eating starter.

9. Pavin Smith, 1B/OF, Virginia
Smith has one of the smoothest left-handed swings in college baseball, and he's been a consistent performer at Virginia and in the Cape Cod League. He's shown flashes of what could be above-average power.

10. Colton Hock, RHP, Stanford
Hock has started only two games in two years at Stanford as the Cardinal staff worked to stretch him out. He will have an opportunity this spring to prove that his power stuff can work deep into games.

11. Seth Romero, LHP, Houston
Romero dominated the American Athletic Conference as a sophomore. Hitters couldn't handle his low-90s fastball and hard slider. He's one of the best lefties in the draft class.

12. Jake Burger, 3B, Missouri State
Burger, who has tremendous power, could play his way into the first round or out of the top three rounds in his junior season. Scouts want to see more athleticism from him at third base, and they want to see better bat control at the plate.

13. Brendon Little, LHP, State College of Florida
Little barely pitched at North Carolina in 2016, so he's transferred to State College of Florida, which is thrilled to get a lefty with a 93-mph fastball and a dominating breaking ball.

14. Clarke Schmidt, RHP, South Carolina
Schmidt took a big step forward as a sophomore at South Carolina. His velocity jumped by 2-3 mph, which helped him earn a spot in the weekend rotation and finish sixth in Division I with 129 strikeouts.

15. Wil Crowe, RHP, South Carolina
If not for an elbow injury, Crowe would likely be pitching in pro ball. He missed all of last season with Tommy John surgery and decided to return to school to prove his front-of-rotation stuff has returned.

16. J.J. Schwarz, C, Florida
Schwarz was a revelation as a freshman when hit 18 home runs. After a disappointing sophomore season, he needs to show he can still drive the ball while also showing improvement defensively behind the plate.

17. Keston Hiura, 2B/OF, UC Irvine
Hiura was the best power hitter on the California high school circuit in 2014. He's hit seven home runs in each of his first two college seasons and has topped .500 in slug-

AP Images

ging twice. He's one of the best hitters in this year's draft class, but he needs to prove he can handle second base defensively.

18. Dalton Guthrie, SS, Florida
The son of former big-league pitcher Mark Guthrie is one of the best defensive players in college. He has a strong arm, good hands and excellent anticipation. But he needs to prove he can hit to go in the first round.

19. Peter Solomon, RHP, Notre Dame
Solomon's control needs refinement, but as one of the most impressive pitchers on the Cape last summer, he showed a promising low-90s fastball and a potentially above-average slider.

20. Griffin Canning, RHP, UCLA
Canning was dominant as a freshman in 2015 and handled a bump to a larger role as a sophomore. He is now UCLA's undisputed ace thanks to his 92-95-mph fastball and hard cutter.

21. Evan Skoug, C, TCU
It's hard to find a scout convinced that Skoug is ever going to be an average catcher defensively, but he's a good enough hitter that he has a plausible path to the big leagues.

22. Michael Gigliotti, OF, Lipscomb
Gigliotti is a speedy, top-of-the-order hitter who knows how to get on base, bunt for hits and swipe a bag once he reaches. His speed also plays well in the outfield, where he is a rangy defender.

23. Corbin Martin, RHP, Texas A&M
Martin has an exceptional mid-90s fastball that will touch 97-98, but he needs to show this spring that he has some idea where it's going. He could be a dominating closer for the Aggies if his control improves.

24. Taylor Walls, SS, Florida State
Walls is a top-of-the-order hitter who knows how to spray the ball around the field, take a walk and cause some havoc with his above-average speed once he reaches base.

25. David Peterson, LHP, Oregon
Peterson has yet to put together the kind of dominating season that's possible from a massive (6'6") lefty who gets good sink on his 88-92-mph two-seam fastball and runs his four-seamer up to 94-95.

26. Joe Dunand, 3B, NC State
The nephew of Alex Rodriguez, Dunand is also a former shortstop who has slid to third. Dunand is better defensively at his new home, and he has some of the best power potential in the draft class.

27. Kevin Smith, SS, Maryland
The Cape Cod League's playoff MVP last summer, Smith is a line-drive hitter who needs better plate discipline. Defensively, he has the arm and reliability for shortstop, but he needs to improve his range.

28. Mitch Hart, RHP, USC
Hart didn't wow scouts in the Cape Cod League last summer, but with solid stuff and a spot in USC weekend rotation, the draft-eligible sophomore could quickly rise up draft boards with a strong season.

29. Dylan Busby, 1B/3B, Florida State
Busby was a fixture in the middle of the Seminoles' lineup as a sophomore and was equally good last summer in the Cape. Scouts love the power, but they want He to prove he can stay at third base defensively.

30. K.J. Harrison, C, Oregon State
If Harrison were catching regularly, his significant power would stand out even more. But he has largely been limited to first base, where there's a lot more pressure on his bat.

31. Ricky Tyler Thomas, LHP, Fresno State
Thomas doesn't blow anyone away, but the slight (6'1", 175) lefty has shown he can baffle hitters by spotting his below-average (87-91-mph) fastball to set up an excellent changeup.

32. Zach Rutherford, SS, Old Dominion
Scouts will focus on whether Rutherford projects as a shortstop or a second baseman in pro ball, but at either spot his athleticism and right-handed power should play well.

33. Hunter Williams, LHP, North Carolina
Williams hasn't pitched that much in two years as a Tar Heel because of control problems. But he finished second in the Cape Cod League in ERA, leading to hopes that he could have a breakout junior season.

34. Mike Rivera, C, Florida
If Rivera and J.J. Schwarz could combine their strengths, you'd have the No. 1 pick in the draft. Schwarz is Florida's hitting catcher; Rivera is the top defender at the position, but he will have to prove he can survive at the plate in pro ball.

35. Tyler Johnson, RHP, South Carolina
Johnson was the closer for USA Baseball's College National Team last summer. He has the fastball/slider combo to miss bats, but he also has some traits that could make him an effective starter.

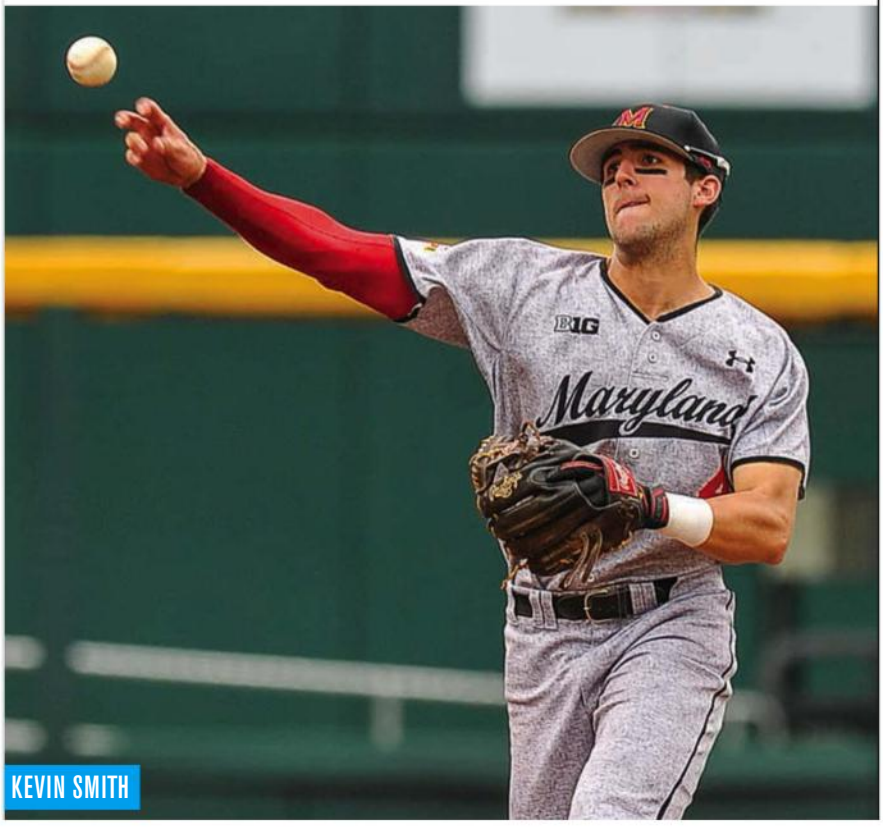
36. Evan White, 1B, Kentucky
White is more athletic than the average college first baseman, and there are scouts who believe he has the skills to play in the outfield. He hit .376 for the Wildcats as a sophomore, but he still needs to improve his strike-zone awareness.

37. Zach Warren, LHP, Tennessee
Warren is a lefty who has plenty of potential, but he has yet to show consistency in his first two years as a Volunteer.

38. Garrett Cave, RHP, Tampa
Cave will be one of the top relievers in this year's draft class and is the top arm in Division II. His control isn't always as sharp as it needs to be, but his 95-mph fastball and power curve give him two potential out pitches.

39. Deon Stafford, C, Saint Joseph's
The 2016 Atlantic 10 Player of the Year has a chance to be a star, as he's a catcher with big-time power and a strong arm. However, he's far from polished defensively.

40. Will Gaddis, RHP, Furman
Gaddis was the Paladins' dominant ace in 2016, and he was equally impressive last summer in the Cape Cod League. He's a four-pitch starter with solid if unspectacular stuff.



KEVIN SMITH

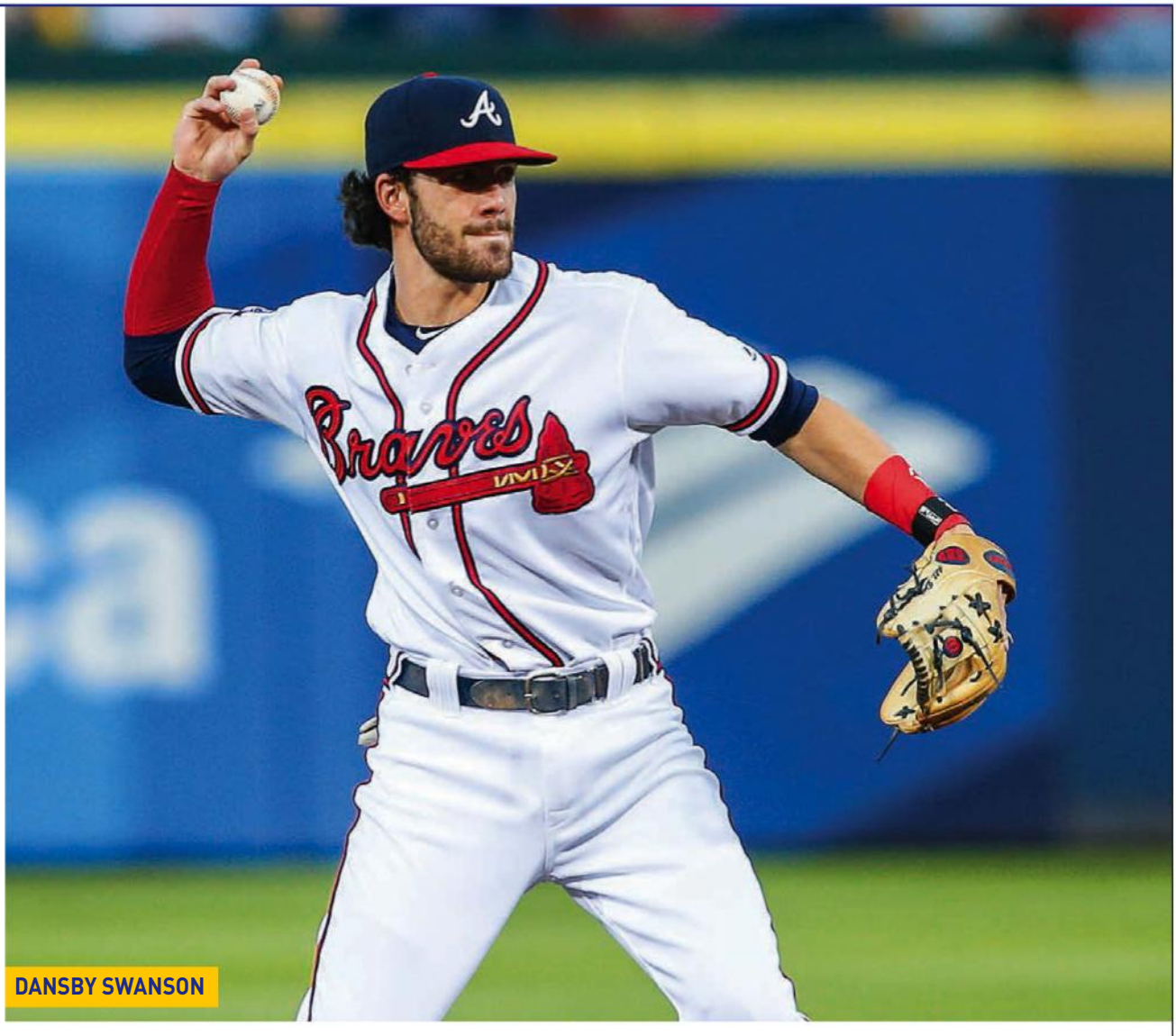
TOP 50 PROSPECTS

BY JJ COOPER

1 ANDREW BENINTENDI

2 YOAN MONCADA

Benintendi: Tom DiPace; Moncada: Swanson: AP Images



DANSBY SWANSON

1. ANDREW BENINTENDI, OF, RED SOX

L/L • 5-10 • 175 • Age: 22

Acquired: First-round pick in 2015

Benintendi doesn't look like your normal No. 1 prospect because he's short and skinnier than your average power hitter. But he has extremely strong wrists and hands, which gives him the bat speed to punish mistakes. As he showed in a late-season call-up and postseason appearance, Benintendi has a chance to be an impact offensive player who also is a well-above-average defender in left field. He's more than capable of playing center field in the major leagues.

2. YOAN MONCADA, 2B/3B, WHITE SOX

B/R • 6-2 • 205 • Age: 21

Acquired: Trade; signed out of Cuba by the Red Sox in 2015

If not for the Chris Sale trade that sent Moncada to Chicago, the Red Sox would have the top two prospects in baseball. Instead, Boston traded away Moncada a little over two years after paying $63 million to sign him out of Cuba. Moncada has as much upside as anyone in the minors. He's a power/speed infielder with the physique of an NFL running back and the speed to match. He does have to improve his contact rate, but his speed, power and feel for the game should make him a cornerstone before long.

3. DANSBY SWANSON, SS, BRAVES

R/R • 6-1 • 190 • Age: 23

Acquired: Trade; first-round pick by the Diamondbacks in 2015

The Braves were 31 games under .500 when Swanson arrived in Atlanta on Aug. 7. From then until the end of the season, Atlanta went 24–18. Swanson wasn't the only reason, but the shortstop quickly became one of the team's most reliable players. Swanson isn't going to be a Corey Seager at the plate or a Francisco Lindor in the field, but he is a very well-rounded, very reliable shortstop.

4. ALEX REYES, RHP, CARDINALS

R/R • 6-3 • 175 • Age: 22

Acquired: Signed out of the Dominican Republic in 2012

If you're looking for a starting pitching prospect who could turn into another Noah Syndergaard — pitching with a turbocharged fastball and a devastating breaking ball — Reyes is the best candidate. He impressed in a late-season call-up and should soon become a valuable fixture in the Cardinals rotation.

5. CODY BELLINGER, 1B/OF, DODGERS

L/L • 6-4 • 210 • Age: 21

Acquired: Fourth-round pick in 2013

Bellinger is a first baseman who is athletic enough to slide to center field at times, but he's such an exceptional defender at first that it seems a waste to move him to the outfield. His combination of hitting ability and power makes him as well-rounded of a position prospect as any player in the minors.

6. GLEYBER TORRES, SS, YANKEES

R/R • 6-1 • 175 • Age: 20

Acquired: Trade; signed out of Venezuela by the Cubs in 2013

No Cubs fan is going to complain if Torres turns into a star. Torres was the price

J.P. CRAWFORD

Chicago paid to acquire Aroldis Chapman at the deadline. Chapman helped the Cubs win their first World Series in more than a century. But it could still be a hefty price. Torres has a chance to be a .280/.350/.450 hitter while providing solid defense at shortstop. In an era of great young shortstops, Torres isn't far away from joining the big club.

7. OZZIE ALBIES, 2B/SS, BRAVES

B/R • 5-9 • 160 • Age: 20

Acquired: Signed out of Curacao in 2013

If Dansby Swanson is the Braves' shortstop for the rest of the decade and beyond, Albies should be the team's second baseman for a similar amount of time. Atlanta has made a point of giving Swanson and Albies plenty of time together to develop the rapport that will serve them well as double-play partners. Albies should be the Braves' leadoff hitter with great bat-to-ball skills and enough speed to swipe 20-plus bases.

8. FRANCIS MARTES, RHP, ASTROS

R/R • 6-1 • 225 • Age: 21

Acquired: Trade; signed out of the Dominican Republic by the Marlins in 2012

Martes was swiped from the Marlins as a throw-in in the Jarred Cosart trade. That may end up being remembered as the Martes trade. His fastball/power curve combo is reminiscent of Astros starter Lance McCullers. But Martes' control and trust in his fastball is far beyond where McCullers was at the same age.

9. J.P. CRAWFORD, SS, PHILLIES

L/R • 6-2 • 180 • Age: 22

Acquired: First-round pick in 2013

Crawford's 2016 season was a little disappointing. He hit for very little power and at times seemed mechanically out of whack at the plate. That should be a short-term hiccup as Crawford is still a smooth-fielding shortstop with an excellent feel for the strike zone. Even if he doesn't tap into the power scouts have long projected, he's still a top shortstop prospect. And if the power does come, he's an All-Star.

10. AUSTIN MEADOWS, OF, PIRATES

L/L • 6-3 • 200 • Age: 21

Acquired: First-round pick in 2013

One of the reasons the offseason was filled with Andrew McCutchen trade rumors was the impending arrival of Meadows. He is one of the more promising hitters in the minors and is capable of slotting into any of the three outfield spots. Meadows has had bad luck with freak injuries, but he should be ready to help Pittsburgh at some point in 2017.

11. NICK SENZEL, 3B, REDS

R/R • 6-1 • 205 • Age: 21

Acquired: First-round pick in 2016

A former Tennessee Volunteers star, Senzel was the safest pick in last summer's draft. Recent top draft picks from the SEC with a track record of success — Dansby Swanson, Alex Bregman and Andrew Benintendi — have flown through the minors at an accelerated pace. There's little reason to believe Senzel won't follow in their footsteps. He's a pure hitter with surprising power, and he should be a defensive asset at third base. He's the player who will speed the Reds' rebuild.

12. AMED ROSARIO, SS, METS

R/R • 6-2 • 190 • Age: 21

Acquired: Signed out of the Dominican Republic in 2012

Rosario has usually been one of the youngest players in whatever league he's played in, but you wouldn't know it from his performance. Asdrubal Cabrera has given the Mets some stability at shortstop after a significant stretch of stopgap options. Rosario is the logical replacement for Cabrera in 2018.

13. ELOY JIMENEZ, OF, CUBS

R/R • 6-4 • 205 • Age: 20

Acquired: Signed out of the Dominican Republic in 2013

Jimenez and Gleyber Torres were the top two international amateur prospects in 2013. Now they both are top-15 prospects. As good as Torres has been, it's easy to find scouts who believe that Jimenez will end up being even better because of Jimenez's ability to hit for average and power. He gave a hint of what he could do with an outstanding performance at the 2016 Futures Game in San Diego.

14. MITCH KELLER, RHP, PIRATES

R/R • 6-3 • 195 • Age: 20

Acquired: Second-round pick in 2014

Keller has yet to throw a pitch above High-A, and much of his 2016 season was spent in Low-A. But a number of scouts who saw him this year believe he is as well-rounded a pitching prospect as there is in the minors right now. Keller has a chance to have three plus pitches, but it's his advanced control and command for his age and his easy delivery that most impress evaluators.

15. BRENT HONEYWELL, RHP, RAYS

R/R • 6-2 • 180 • Age: 22

Acquired: Supplemental second-round pick in 2014

Honeywell has earned a lot of fame because he's one of the few pitchers in pro ball who still throws a screwball, the pitch that helped Fernando Valenzuela rise to dominance. But Honeywell's screwball isn't the main reason for his success. He has a plus fastball and advanced feel for setting up hitters.

16. KYLE TUCKER, OF, ASTROS

L/R • 6-4 • 190 • Age: 20

Acquired: First-round pick in 2015

If Houston's 2011 draft set the team on a course to contention with Carlos Correa and Lance McCullers, the team's 2015 draft may be the reason the Astros start winning playoff series. Their first pick, Alex Bregman, is already a fixture in Houston's lineup, and Tucker figures to be in the majors in the not-

AP Images

too-distant future. He has shown the same sweet swing, solid defense and developing power in Class A that made him a former *Baseball America* High School Player of the Year. And despite average speed, he's shown a knack for stealing bases as well.

17. REYNALDO LOPEZ, RHP, WHITE SOX

R/R • 6-0 • 185 • Age: 23

Acquired: Trade; signed out of the Dominican Republic by the Nationals in 2012

It's a pretty fun discussion to ask scouts who have seen both Lopez and Lucas Giolito which one they prefer as a prospect. The answers seem to be split pretty closely down the middle, but the White Sox didn't have to choose as they acquired both in the trade that sent Adam Eaton to Washington. They got the 100 mph fastball and exceptional changeup of Lopez and the bigger-bodied Giolito, who gets to his velocity easier and has a better breaking ball. Lopez is more likely to end up a reliever, but he's also more big-league ready and has better control than Giolito.

18. WILLY ADAMES, SS, RAYS

R/R • 6-1 • 180 • Age: 21

Acquired: Trade; signed out of the Dominican Republic by the Tigers in 2012

Adames, acquired from Detroit with Drew Smyly in the 2014 David Price trade, has long faced questions about whether he'd outgrow shortstop, but so far he looks firmly planted at the position. And his bat shows signs that he could produce the thump of a corner outfielder with the glove of a middle infielder.

19. LUCAS GIOLITO, RHP, WHITE SOX

R/R • 6-6 • 255 • Age: 22

Acquired: Trade; first-round pick by the Nationals in 2012

Giolito's star has dimmed a little in the past year. His fastball lacked life, was easy for hitters to see out of his hand and, most important, lost a little of its oomph. His curveball was still excellent, but if Giolito is struggling to locate a 93-94 mph fastball, he's not the dominating potential ace he is when he's locating 96-97. The White Sox's top job now is to get some of that arm speed back while also helping him locate his pitches better.

20. VICTOR ROBLES, OF, NATIONALS

R/R • 6-0 • 185 • Age: 19

Acquired: Signed out of the Dominican Republic in 2013

The Nationals paid a very hefty price in prospects for outfielder Adam Eaton, but they did hold on to their best position prospect. Robles is a speedy center fielder who can hit. He doesn't walk a lot, but he makes up for that by getting plunked a lot since he crowds the plate and challenges pitchers to try to bust him inside.

21. JOSE DE LEON, RHP, DODGERS

R/R • 6-2 • 190 • Age: 24

Acquired: 24th-round pick in 2013

De Leon was an overweight college righthander with a good arm. But as a pro, he slimmed down and saw his stuff and control take a big step forward. He now has a long track record of minor-league success, and his only big hiccup has been some minor shoulder soreness that has limited his innings.

22. JOSH HADER, LHP, BREWERS

L/L • 6-3 • 185 • Age: 22

Acquired: Trade; 19th-round pick by the Orioles in 2012

Scouts have long been skeptical about whether Hader's slight frame and unconventional delivery could hold up as a starter long term. That may be one of the reasons he has already been traded twice (by the Orioles and the Astros). But Hader has had no durability issues so far and has shown some of the best stuff from the left side in the minors.

23. MICKEY MONIAK, OF, PHILLIES

L/R • 6-2 • 185 • Age: 18

Acquired: First-round pick in 2016

The No. 1 overall pick in the 2016 draft is smaller than the average top draft pick, but the California prep star impressed the Phillies front office with consistently solid at-bats, surprising power and excellent center field defense.

WILLY ADAMES

24. VLADIMIR GUERRERO JR., 3B, BLUE JAYS

R/R • 6-1 • 200 • Age: 18

Acquired: Signed out of the Dominican Republic in 2015

The son of former Expos/Angels star Vladimir Guerrero is bigger and stronger than his old man was at the same age, but he has the same knack for hitting. Not everyone is sure Guerrero will be able to stay at third base, but if he hits like scouts project, it won't really matter.

25. TYLER GLASNOW, RHP, PIRATES

L/R • 6-8 • 225 • Age: 23

Acquired: Fifth-round pick in 2011

No one really ever squares up Glasnow, as his fastball plays even better than its 92-94-mph velocity because of the downhill plane and the massive amount of extension he gets from his 6'8" frame. But he too often hurts himself with wildness, and he struggles to hold runners once they reach base.

26. ANDERSON ESPINOZA, RHP, PADRES

R/R • 6-0 • 160 • Age: 19

Acquired: Trade; signed out of Venezuela by the Red Sox in 2014

Espinoza's 2016 season was a little bit disappointing as his secondary pitches didn't have the same bite they had shown in 2015. But he still became the focal point of the Padres' rebuilding effort when they landed him for Drew Pomeranz in a midseason deal with the Red Sox.

27. BRENDAN RODGERS, SS, ROCKIES

R/R • 6-0 • 180 • Age: 20

Acquired: First-round pick in 2015

The top high-school hitter in the 2015 class had a solid first full pro season in Low-A Asheville. He still plays shortstop primarily, but he's worked on adding second base to his toolbox as well. Long term, he's a potentially plus hitter with average power who can stay at a middle infield position.

28. DAVID PAULINO, RHP, ASTROS

R/R • 6-7 • 215 • Age: 23

Acquired: Trade; signed out of the Dominican Republic by the Tigers in 2010

The Astros acquired Paulino in an otherwise long-forgotten trade that sent Jose Veras to Detroit in 2013. Paulino made his big-league debut last season and should see more time in Houston in 2017. He has the makings of a dominating front-line starter, but he has to demonstrate that he has the durability to hold up over 30 starts. So far he has yet to handle 100-plus innings in a season.

29. RAFAEL DEVERS, 3B, RED SOX

L/R • 6-0 • 195 • Age: 20

Acquired: Signed out the Dominican Republic in 2013

Devers had an excellent first half in 2015 and fell apart in the second half. In 2016, he was poor in the first half and excellent in the second half. So he's still looking to string a full season together. But Devers has given the Red Sox signs that he'll be a line-drive-hitting, middle-of-the-order hitter with solid defense at third. With Yoan Moncada traded to Chicago, Devers is once again the team's long-term answer at the position.

30. TYLER O'NEILL, OF, MARINERS

R/R • 5/11 • 210 • Age: 21

Acquired: Third-round pick in 2013

The Mariners' new front office gathered its top minor-league hitters together before last season began and informed everyone that strikeouts were no longer OK. The emphasis on improved contact paid off for O'Neill. He continued to smash long home runs, but he began doing so while hitting for average as well, giving him a chance to be a productive big-league slugger.

31. MANUEL MARGOT, OF, PADRES

R/R • 5-11 • 180 • Age: 22

Acquired: Trade; signed out of the Dominican Republic by the Red Sox in 2011

The Padres have rebuilt their farm system with an international spending spree, a big 2016 draft and some significant trades. Margot, acquired in the Craig Kimbrel deal, is one of the top trade pickups San Diego has brought in. He's a defensive whiz in center field who has the swing to be a .300 hitter.

32. LEWIS BRINSON, OF, BREWERS

R/R • 6-3 • 195 • Age: 22

Acquired: Trade; first-round pick in 2012 by the Rangers

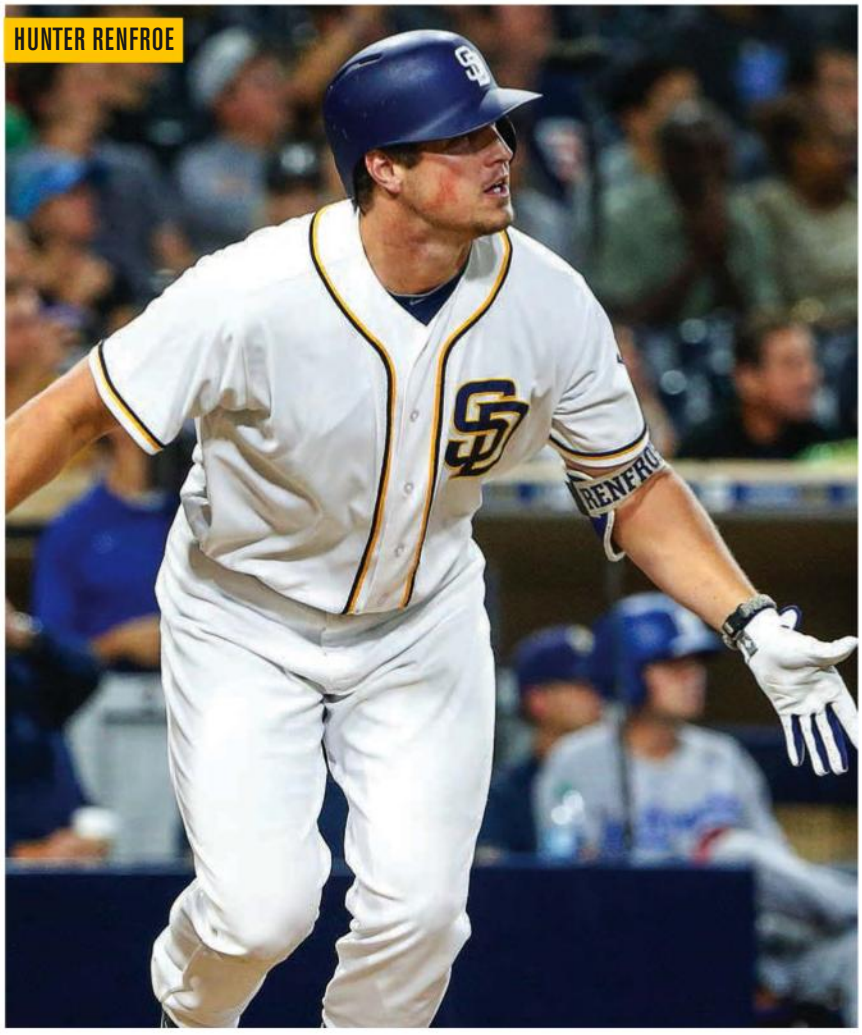
Brinson, acquired in last summer's Jonathan Lucroy trade, is part of an impressive youth movement that could start to pay benefits in 2018 and beyond. Brinson has a shot at being a power/speed center fielder who could be a 30-30 threat in the big leagues.

33. HUNTER RENFROE, OF, PADRES

R/R • 6-1 • 220 • Age: 25

Acquired: First-round pick in 2013

Renfroe is a physical specimen like few others. He can drive a ball 450-plus feet, run down balls in the outfield like a much smaller, skinnier man, and he has the arm to make runners think twice before trying to take an extra bag. But he also steers clear of walks, which will cause issues against big-league pitchers.



AP Images

34. CLINT FRAZIER, OF, YANKEES
R/R • 6-1 • 190 • Age: 22
Acquired: Trade; first-round pick by the Indians in 2013
Andrew Miller will pay benefits for the Indians for several years to come, but the Yankees did extract a hefty price for the lefty reliever by getting back Frazier. Frazier is short, but he's broad shouldered with a big swing and big power. He and Aaron Judge give New York a pair of sluggers who should join Gary Sanchez in the lineup before long.

35. RON ACUNA, OF, BRAVES
R/R • 6-0 • 180 • Age: 19
Acquired: Signed out of Venezuela in 2014
If you're looking for a breakout minor-league star of 2017, Acuna is a good choice. He may have been a 2016 revelation if not for a hand injury that cost him much of the season. Acuna has the speed and feel to run down balls in center field and has a chance to develop power as well.

36. KOLBY ALLARD, LHP, BRAVES
L/L • 6-1 • 180 • Age: 19
Acquired: First-round pick in 2015
The Braves' 2016 Low-A Rome team won the South Atlantic League title despite fielding the youngest roster in the league in over a decade. Allard's steady development into the team's ace was a big reason. He's a lefty with enough stuff to be a front-line starter.

37. CODY REED, LHP, REDS
L/L • 6-5 • 220 • Age: 23
Acquired: Trade; second-round pick in 2013 by the Royals
Reed's steady development hit a massive setback when he reached the big leagues last year. His control and command took a step back, and his fastball went from a hard-to-catch-up-to 92-95 mph to a much-more-hittable 90-93 mph. Reed's fastball/slider two-fer is good enough to wipe out big-league hitters, but he has to command it better.

38. FRANCISCO MEJIA, C, INDIANS
B/R • 5-10 • 175 • Age: 21
Acquired: Signed out of the Dominican Republic in 2012
Mejia was dealt to the Brewers last July, but the trade ended up falling apart when Jonathan Lucroy exercised his no-trade clause and vetoed a move to the Indians. That may pay off for Cleveland as the Indians got surprising production from catcher Roberto Perez in the playoffs and were able to keep Mejia, one of the best-hitting catchers in the minors.

39. MICHAEL KOPECH, RHP, WHITE SOX
R/R • 6-3 • 205 • Age: 20
Acquired: Trade; first-round pick by the Red Sox in 2014
No one in the minors consistently throws harder than Kopech. The righthander will reach 100 mph regularly as a starter and has bumped it up to 102-103 at times. He still has a lot of refinement ahead of him, as his control comes and goes, and at times he's forced into counts where even a 100-mph fastball can be hit. The biggest thing Kopech needs is to get a lot of innings in 2017. He missed time in 2015 with a 50-game PED suspension and in 2016 with a broken hand he suffered in a fight.

40. LUKE WEAVER, RHP, CARDINALS
R/R • 6-2 • 170 • Age: 23
Acquired: First-round pick in 2014
A star at Florida State, Weaver has gotten better and better as a pro. He wasn't ready for a big-league call-up last year, but with an improved curveball to pair with a mid-90s fastball, he has the potential to fit into the middle of the Cardinals' rotation at some point soon.

41. JORGE ALFARO, C, PHILLIES
R/R • 6-2 • 225 • Age: 23
Acquired: Trade; signed out of Colombia by the Rangers in 2010
The Phillies acquired Alfaro in the 2015 trade that sent Cole Hamels to Texas. Alfaro has long been considered one of the more promising catching prospects in the minors, but the results have lagged behind his very impressive athleticism. Alfaro made big strides in 2016 as he cleared up his receiving, improved his throwing mechanics and tapped into his power at the plate more consistently.

42. RILEY PINT, RHP, ROCKIES
R/R • 6-4 • 195 • Age: 19
Acquired: First-round pick in 2016
Pint is arguably the hardest-throwing high school pitcher scouts have ever seen. He touched 100 mph regularly in high school and bumped it up to 101-102 in his pro debut. He has to tone down some of the effort in his delivery and throw more strikes, but the arm is special.

43. JOSH BELL, 1B/OF, PIRATES
B/R • 6-2 • 240 • Age: 24
Acquired: Second-round pick in 2011
As a hitter, Bell is ready to help the Pirates' big-league club. Defensively, he still needs to prove he's reliable enough at first base that his bat can outweigh his limitations with the glove. The switch-hitter has a chance to be an above-average hitter with above-average power as well.

44. JEFF HOFFMAN, RHP, ROCKIES
R/R • 6-5 • 225 • Age: 24
Acquired: Trade; first-round pick by the Blue Jays in 2014
The Rockies, who traded for Hoffman in the 2015 Troy Tulowitzki swap, are quietly building a solid — and largely home-grown — big-league rotation. Hoffman could join it before long as a durable middle-of-the-rotation starter who generates ground balls. And he's just starting to figure out how to get a key strikeout when needed.

45. YADIER ALVAREZ, RHP, DODGERS
R/R • 6-3 • 175 • Age: 21
Acquired: Signed out of Cuba in 2015
Alvarez has a chance to be the best payoff from the Dodgers' massive spending spree on Cubans. He has the arm speed and velocity to be either a dominating closer or a power starter. And now that he's gotten acclimated to the U.S., he could move quickly in 2017.

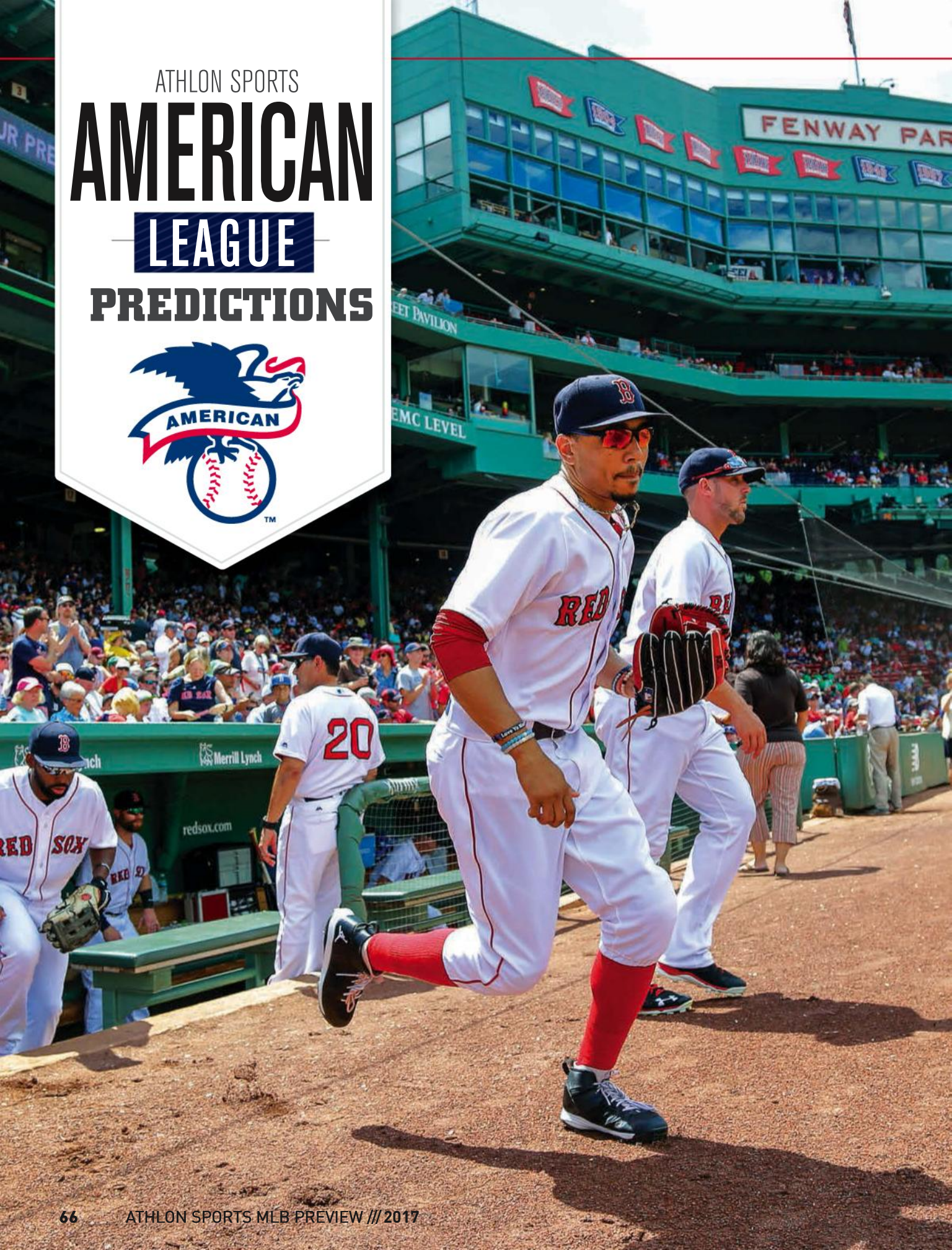
46. MIKE SOROKA, RHP, BRAVES
R/R • 6-4 • 195 • Age: 19
Acquired: First-round pick in 2015
Most Canadians with Soroka's athleticism and strength end up playing hockey, but he figured out as a teenager that he had a clearer path to success as a pitcher. That's paid off for the Braves as Soroka has advanced feel for a young pitcher and very solid stuff.

47. KYLE LEWIS, OF, MARINERS
R/R • 6-4 • 210 • Age: 21
Acquired: First-round pick in 2016
Baseball America's 2016 College Player of the Year at Mercer was off to a strong start in his pro debut when he shredded his knee in a grisly collision at home plate. But Lewis has attacked rehab like a 3-0 fastball, and he should be back in the lineup early in 2017. He has excellent power potential and may be able to stick in center field.

48. FRANKLIN PEREZ, RHP, ASTROS
R/R • 6-3 • 197 • Age: 19
Acquired: Signed out of Venezuela in 2014
The Astros have created an assembly line of hard-throwing righthanders. Lance McCullers is now a fixture in the big-league rotation. Joe Musgrove joined him late last season. Now Francis Martes and David Paulino are close to big-league ready. Next in line could be Perez, a righthander with a plus fastball and a developing breaking ball and changeup.

49. SIXTO SANCHEZ, RHP, PHILLIES
R/R • 6-0 • 185 • Age: 18
Acquired: Signed out of the Dominican Republic in 2015
Last year, Anderson Espinoza was the star of the Gulf Coast League as a precocious pitcher with a high-90s fastball and surprisingly advanced secondary pitches. Sanchez's easy velocity was every bit as impressive as Espinoza's, and his performance was even better.

50. JASON GROOME, LHP, RED SOX
L/L • 6-6 • 220 • Age: 18
Acquired: First-round pick in 2016
Groome battled with Riley Pint for the title of best high school pitching prospect in the 2016 draft class, but he ended up sliding in the draft due to concerns about his makeup. Of course, Cole Hamels was able to overcome similar questions early in his career, and Groome's stuff is every bit as good as Hamels'.



ATHLON SPORTS

AMERICAN LEAGUE PREDICTIONS

PREDICTIONS

AL EAST

1. Boston Red Sox
2. Baltimore Orioles*
3. Toronto Blue Jays
4. New York Yankees
5. Tampa Bay Rays

AL CENTRAL

1. Cleveland Indians
2. Detroit Tigers
3. Kansas City Royals
4. Chicago White Sox
5. Minnesota Twins

AL WEST

1. Houston Astros
2. Texas Rangers*
3. Seattle Mariners
4. Los Angeles Angels
5. Oakland A's

*Wild Card

ALCS

BOSTON RED SOX OVER CLEVELAND INDIANS

WORLD SERIES

CHICAGO CUBS OVER BOSTON RED SOX

Betts: AP Images; Trout: Tom DiPace

AL MVP

1. Mike Trout, OF, Los Angeles Angels
2. Mookie Betts, OF, Boston Red Sox
3. Manny Machado, 3B, Baltimore Orioles
4. Francisco Lindor, SS, Cleveland Indians
5. Jose Altuve, 2B, Houston Astros
6. Chris Sale, LHP, Boston Red Sox
7. Adrian Beltre, 3B, Texas Rangers
8. Xander Bogaerts, SS, Boston Red Sox
9. Corey Kluber, RHP, Cleveland Indians
10. Josh Donaldson, 3B, Toronto Blue Jays

AL CY YOUNG

1. Chris Sale, LHP, Boston Red Sox
2. Corey Kluber, RHP, Cleveland Indians
3. David Price, LHP, Boston Red Sox
4. Chris Archer, RHP, Tampa Bay Rays
5. Justin Verlander, RHP, Detroit Tigers

AL ROOKIE OF THE YEAR

1. Andrew Benintendi, OF, Boston Red Sox
2. Yoan Moncada, 2B, Chicago White Sox
3. Lucas Giolito, RHP, Chicago White Sox
4. Carson Fulmer, RHP, Chicago White Sox
5. Aaron Judge, OF, New York Yankees

BALTIMORE ORIOLES

2017 PREDICTION
2nd
AL East

2016 RECORD
89-73

HOME: 50-31 **ROAD:** 39-42

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

TEAM INFO

ORIOLE PARK AT CAMDEN YARDS
Opened: 1992 **Capacity:** 48,867
Left: 333' **Center:** 410' **Right:** 318'
Tickets: 888-848-BIRD
baltimore.orioles.mlb.com

➤ FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
3B Manny Machado

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
LHP Zach Britton

BULL MARKET
RHP Kevin Gausman

BEAR MARKET
LHP Wade Miley

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
OF Joey Rickard

IPO DH Trey Mancini

FUTURES MARKET C Chance Sisco

INSIDER TIP The Orioles are largely a team of players on lateral career planes. Exceptions with some additional upside left include Gausman, Dylan Bundy and Jonathan Schoop.

➤ STATLINE

TEAM RUNS COST BY STRIKEOUTS: 2016 MLB

1. Chris Davis, Orioles	**60.0**
2. Chris Carter, Brewers	59.6
3. Mike Napoli, Indians	54.1
4. Justin Upton, Tigers	46.5
5. George Springer, Astros	46.4

Source: Bill James Handbook

The Orioles are picked to finish in or near last place every offseason, and they continue to contend while confounding their critics. The upcoming season shouldn't be any different. They can hit, they can field and no one puts out a better bullpen. They also have one of the game's best managers in Buck Showalter and an executive vice president, Dan Duquette, who never stops crafting the roster and making depth moves that so often pay off down the road. The Orioles would benefit from a legitimate table-setter atop their order, which was a priority over the winter, and they desperately need the rotation to duplicate its September success. The starters will make or break the season, and the unit on paper pales in comparison to the rest of the division. That's the primary concern.

ROTATION The Orioles may not have the best starters, but they're not hurting in the depth department. They went into the winter with six candidates for five spots, leaving open the possibility of a trade in spring training. Chris Tillman remains the ace. He appeared to be on his way to a 20-win season before suffering a shoulder injury. Kevin Gausman and Dylan Bundy are former first-round picks with ace stuff, but they're still developing. Gausman needs to finally make the jump instead of inching along. Bundy just needs to stay healthy after moving into the rotation last summer. Showalter has indicated that the club won't worry about Bundy's innings total. Veterans Ubaldo Jimenez, Yovani Gallardo and Wade Miley are vying for the last two spots, and they're all pending free agents. Jimenez has been a bust since signing his four-year, $50 million contract, but he came on strong over the final month of the 2016 season. Gallardo showed up in camp with a weak shoulder and eventually landed on the disabled list, but he's a nice bounce-back candidate. Miley disappointed after the Orioles traded for him, posting a 6.17 ERA in 11 starts, but he allowed only four runs over his last three outings.

BULLPEN There wasn't a better reliever in baseball last year than lefthander Zach Britton, who went 47-for-47 in save opportunities, registered a 0.54 ERA and placed fourth in AL Cy Young voting. It was a historic season that will be hard to duplicate. The Orioles are flush with quality setup men, led by veteran Darren O'Day, who made two stops on the disabled list last season. In his absence, Brad Brach stepped up and pitched well enough to earn his first All-Star Game berth. Brach posted a 0.91 ERA in the first half and finally gained notice. Mychal Givens has made the conversion from minor-league shortstop to quality reliever, going 8–2 with a 3.13 ERA in 66 appearances as a rookie. Lefthander Donnie Hart also made the jump from Double-A to the majors and emerged as a quality specialist. The Orioles non-tendered Vance Worley, but they have plenty of long relief candidates.

MIDDLE INFIELD J.J. Hardy and Jonathan Schoop form one of the best double-play combinations in baseball. Hardy remains one of the most reliable shortstops in the game, making every routine play and plenty of tough ones. He doesn't have the best range or arm, but he's always in the right place, and he's the undisputed leader of the infield. Schoop possesses a rifle for an arm, and any runner sliding into him does so at his own risk. His range grades out poorly in the defensive metrics, but he passes the eye test.

CORNERS Third baseman Manny Machado makes the short list of best players in the majors. He's already won a Platinum Glove. No one has a stronger arm or better range at the hot corner. Factor in his production at the plate, including the 40 doubles, 37 home runs and .876 OPS, and it's no wonder he finished fifth in AL MVP voting. Across the diamond, Chris Davis was a finalist for a Gold Glove and finally shed the label of underappreciated defender. No one is better at scooping throws in the dirt. He played most of the season with a hand injury that hurt his production at the plate in his first season after signing a seven-year, $161 million contract. However, he's still one of the most feared power hitters in the game.

OUTFIELD The Orioles want to upgrade their outfield defense. Center fielder Adam Jones wasn't a finalist for a Gold Glove, though he remains one of the better defenders. Critics say he plays too shallow. He needed to cover a lot of ground in the alleys with Hyun Soo Kim and Mark Trumbo flanking him. Trumbo is a free agent who projects as a designated hitter if he re-signs. Kim was better than advertised, but still not close to elite. Kim did, however, lead the club in average (.302) and on-base percentage (.382) in his first season outside the Korean Baseball Organization. He was a platoon player, receiving only 18 at-bats against lefthanders, and may share the position with former Rule 5 pick Joey Rickard. Rickard, who didn't play after July 20 due to a hand injury, can handle all three outfield positions and is a candidate to start in right field if the Orioles can't find anyone else. He brings speed to the lineup that's sorely needed.

Tom DiPace

MANNY MACHADO

➤ PROJECTED LINEUP

NEXT LEVEL

LINEUP

RF	Joey Rickard (R)
LF	Hyun Soo Kim (L)
3B	Manny Machado (R)
1B	Chris Davis (L)
CF	**Adam Jones (R)**
DH	Trey Mancini (R)
2B	Jonathan Schoop (R)
C	Welington Castillo (R)
SS	J.J. Hardy (R)

BENCH

C	Caleb Joseph (R)
UT	**Ryan Flaherty (L)**
OF	Aneury Tavarez (L)
OF	Dariel Alvarez (R)

ROTATION

RHP	Chris Tillman
RHP	**Kevin Gausman**
RHP	Dylan Bundy
RHP	Yovani Gallardo
LHP	Wade Miley

BULLPEN

LHP	**Zach Britton (Closer)**
RHP	Darren O'Day
RHP	Brad Brach
RHP	Mychal Givens
LHP	Donnie Hart
RHP	Ubaldo Jimenez
RHP	Logan Verrett

Adam Jones swung at 44.8 percent of pitches outside the strike zone last season, worst in baseball. Still, he had his lowest strikeout rate of his career (17.1 percent) and his highest walk rate since 2009 (5.8 percent).

Ryan Flaherty's 27.3 percent strikeout rate would have been the 10th worst in MLB had he qualified for the batting title.

Kevin Gausman's ERA dropped from 4.25 to 3.61 as his strand rate rose from 72.3 to 81.2 percent. He was one of seven qualified starters to strand more than 80 percent of his baserunners.

Zach Britton gave up weak contact on 30.9 percent of balls that were put in play against him, which led the American League. His 14.8 percent hard contact rate paced baseball.

➤ SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE ORIOLES

"As long as you don't make a big mistake over the heart of the plate, you're all right against the Orioles. Problem is, with as many serious power threats at they have — guys like Manny Machado, Chris Davis, Adam Jones, back to back to back — it makes them a brutal lineup to get through. They've got a lot of swing-and-miss guys, so you can pitch to them, but if you don't make your pitches, you'll be whip-lashing your head a lot. The big issue for them is whether they can ever find an ace. They don't have many upper-level guys ready to contribute, so it comes down to the usual: Kevin Gausman and Dylan Bundy. That bullpen is a nice luxury to have with Zach Britton, Brad Brach and Darren O'Day at the back end, and until an ace emerges in the rotation, that combination of power, bullpen and defense is going to have to carry them again."

➤ STATISTICIAN

4	Stolen bases for Rule 5 pick Joey Rickard in 2016. That, believe it or not, led the Orioles.
19	Stolen bases for the Orioles as a team, ranking last in the majors.
0.91	Brad Brach's ERA in the first half of the 2016 season.
3.94	Brach's ERA after the All-Star Break.
0	Blown saves by closer Zach Britton in 47 opportunities.
219	Strikeouts by Chris Davis, the most in the majors.
20	Number of Orioles All-Stars in the last five seasons, second in the majors behind the Cardinals (24).
3.40	Orioles bullpen ERA, ranking first in the American League and third in the majors
23	Pickoffs by lefthander Wade Miley since 2011, tied for fourth most in the majors.

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3 TOR	4	5 TOR	6	7 NYY	8 NYY
9 NYY	10	11 BOS	12 BOS	13 TOR	14 TOR	15 TOR
16 TOR	17	18 CIN	19 CIN	20 CIN	21 BOS	22 BOS
23 BOS	24 TB	25 TB	26 TB	27	28 NYY	29 NYY
30 NYY						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 BOS	2 BOS	3 BOS	4 BOS	5 CWS	6 CWS
7 CWS	8 WAS	9 WAS	10 WAS	11 WAS	12 KC	13 KC
14 KC	15	16 DET	17 DET	18 DET	19 TOR	20 TOR
21 TOR	22 MIN	23 MIN	24 MIN	25	26 HOU	27 HOU
28 HOU	29 NYY	30 NYY	31 NYY			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 BOS	2 BOS	3 BOS
4 BOS	5	6 PIT	7 PIT	8	9 NYY	10 NYY
11 NYY	12 CWS	13 CWS	14 CWS	15 CWS	16 STL	17 STL
18 STL	19 CLE	20 CLE	21 CLE	22 CLE	23 TB	24 TB
25 TB	26	27 TOR	28 TOR	29 TOR	30 TB	

July

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 TB
2 TB	3 MIL	4 MIL	5 MIL	6 MIN	7 MIN	8 MIN
9 MIN	10	11	12	13	14 CHC	15 CHC
16 CHC	17 TEX	18 TEX	19 TEX	20 TEX	21 HOU	22 HOU
23 HOU	24 TB	25 TB	26 TB	27	28 TEX	29 TEX
30 TEX	31 KC					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 KC	2 KC	3 DET	4 DET	5 DET
6 DET	7 LAA	8 LAA	9 LAA	10 OAK	11 OAK	12 OAK
13 OAK	14 SEA	15 SEA	16 SEA	17	18 LAA	19 LAA
20 LAA	21 OAK	22 OAK	23 OAK	24	25 BOS	26 BOS
27 BOS	28 SEA	29 SEA	30 SEA	31 TOR		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 TOR	2 TOR
3 TOR	4 NYY	5 NYY	6 NYY	7	8 CLE	9 CLE
10 CLE	11 TOR	12 TOR	13 TOR	14 NYY	15 NYY	16 NYY
17 NYY	18 BOS	19 BOS	20 BOS	21 TB	22 TB	23 TB
24 TB	25	26 PIT	27 PIT	28	29 TB	30 TB
1 TB						

ADAM JONES

CATCHING Matt Wieters won't be behind the plate for the first time since 2009, with the Orioles deciding to spend less on catching. They signed Welington Castillo to a one-year, $6 million contract that includes a $7 million player option for 2018. They wanted a short-term commitment while waiting for prospect Chance Sisco, who needs more experience at Triple-A. Castillo has some pop and a plus-arm, but he also was charged with 10 passed balls last season and grades poorly in pitch framing. Caleb Joseph is expected to be the backup, though Francisco Pena is on the 40-man roster and out of minor league options.

DH/BENCH The Orioles are prepared to make rookie Trey Mancini their primary designated hitter despite a résumé that includes only five major-league games. The three home runs he hit in those give games turned heads. They could platoon him with a left-handed hitter or send him to the bench if they add a hitter later in the winter. Either way, they seem committed to breaking camp with him. Ryan Flaherty was a non-tender candidate, but the Orioles offered him a contract. He doesn't do much with the bat, but he plays every position except catcher.

MANAGEMENT Showalter took heat for not using Britton in the wild card game, an 11-inning loss in Toronto, and he's willing to take it. He knows it comes with the gig and it shouldn't erase all of his accomplishments. Showalter changed a losing culture; the Orioles have posted five straight non-losing seasons and made the playoffs in 2012, 2014 and 2016. Duquette is methodical, but there's a method to his madness. He's gotten some great bargains by letting the market play out, and the Trumbo-for-Steve Clevenger trade with the Mariners was a steal.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Orioles always appear at a disadvantage in a division filled with big spenders. They also don't have the prospects to swing major deals. They know who they are, and they somehow make it work. There's no reason to believe they won't contend in 2017, but the rotation could stand in their way. It's filled with question marks.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

NEW TURF The Orioles have replaced the sod at Camden Yards for the first time since 2008. Replacing the existing grass on the field, in the bullpens and in the park's turf farm will be 105,000 square feet of 100 percent Kentucky Bluegrass from Tuckahoe Turf Farms in Hammonton, N.J . They're also installing LED lighting.

MASHERS The Orioles led the majors with 253 home runs in 2016. For the fourth consecutive season, an Oriole has been the major-league leader in home runs: Chris Davis in 2013, Nelson Cruz in 2014, Davis in 2015 and Mark Trumbo in 2016.

250 BOMBS The 2016 Orioles became the fifth team in major-league history to hit at least 250 home runs in a season, joining the 1997 Mariners (264), 2005 Rangers (260), 2010 Blue Jays (257) and 1996 Orioles (257). They surpassed the 2000 Astros (249).

RECORD SETTING Closer Zach Britton's 0.54 ERA led all big-league relievers and was the lowest in history among pitchers with at least 50 innings. Only two other pitchers in history have posted an ERA below 1.00 in a season with at least 40 saves: Dennis Eckersley in 1990 (0.61, 48 saves) and Fernando Rodney in 2012 (0.60, 48 saves).

DURABLE Second baseman Jonathan Schoop owns the second-longest active games started streak in the majors with 162 starts. He trails the Royals' Alcides Escobar (171). Prior to Aug. 20, Schoop was the last player in the majors to play every inning of his team's games last season.

WINNING WAYS Since the beginning of the 2012 season, the Orioles lead American League clubs and rank fourth in the majors with 444 wins, finishing with a .500 or better record in each of the last five seasons. In that span, Orioles hitters lead the majors with 1,107 home runs and have committed the fewest errors with 404.

CHASING EARL Manager Buck Showalter's 1,429 career victories rank 25th all-time. His 547 wins with the Orioles are second most in club history ahead of Paul Richards (517) and behind Earl Weaver (1,480). In addition, Showalter ranks fourth among active managers behind Bruce Bochy, Dusty Baker and Mike Scioscia.

STREAKY The Orioles put together three winning streaks of seven games during the first half of the season. It's the eighth time in club history that the Orioles have registered at least three winning streaks of seven or more games within the same season.

Tom DiPace

ORIOLES ROSTER

Executive Vice President of Baseball Operations: Dan Duquette **Manager:** Buck Showalter **Coaches:** Scott Coolbaugh (hitting), Bobby Dickerson (third base), Wayne Kirby (first base), Roger McDowell (pitching), Alan Mills (bullpen), John Russell (bench)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
64	Jayson Aquino	L-L	6-1	225	11/22/92	**BALTIMORE**	**0-0**	**0.00**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**2.1**	**1**	**0**	**3**
						Norfolk (AAA)	2-0	2.08	5	0	0	13.0	12	3	12
						Bowie (AA)	5-10	3.90	20	19	0	115.1	130	33	77
35	Brad Brach	R-R	6-6	215	4/12/86	**BALTIMORE**	**10-4**	**2.05**	**71**	**0**	**2**	**79.0**	**57**	**25**	**92**
68	Parker Bridwell	R-R	6-4	185	8/2/91	**BALTIMORE**	**0-0**	**13.50**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**3.1**	**5**	**1**	**3**
						Norfolk (AAA)	1-0	1.80	4	0	0	10.0	4	1	14
						Bowie (AA)	1-1	4.53	18	7	1	55.2	56	28	38
						Aberdeen (A)	1-1	5.40	2	0	0	5.0	2	0	4
						GCL Orioles (R)	2-0	0.00	3	0	0	6.0	3	3	7
53	Zach Britton	L-L	6-3	195	12/22/87	**BALTIMORE**	**2-1**	**0.54**	**69**	**0**	**47**	**67.0**	**38**	**18**	**74**
37	Dylan Bundy	S-R	6-1	200	11/15/92	**BALTIMORE**	**10-6**	**4.02**	**36**	**14**	**0**	**109.2**	**109**	**42**	**104**
71	Oliver Drake	R-R	6-4	215	1/13/87	**BALTIMORE**	**1-0**	**4.00**	**14**	**0**	**0**	**18.0**	**11**	**7**	**21**
						Norfolk (AAA)	1-4	2.72	47	1	10	56.1	44	25	79
49	Yovani Gallardo	R-R	6-2	205	2/27/86	**BALTIMORE**	**6-8**	**5.42**	**23**	**23**	**0**	**118.0**	**126**	**61**	**85**
						Norfolk (AAA)	1-0	3.60	2	2	0	10.0	5	4	10
						Frederick (A)	0-0	9.00	1	1	0	3.0	7	2	4
61	Jason Garcia	R-R	6-0	185	11/21/92	Bowie (AA)	6-10	4.73	24	24	0	123.2	137	54	71
39	Kevin Gausman	L-R	6-3	190	1/6/91	**BALTIMORE**	**9-12**	**3.61**	**30**	**30**	**0**	**179.2**	**183**	**47**	**174**
						Norfolk (AAA)	0-1	4.76	1	1	0	5.2	4	2	9
						Bowie (AA)	0-1	0.00	1	1	0	2.0	4	1	2
						Frederick (A)	0-1	2.70	1	1	0	3.1	4	2	8
60	Mychal Givens	R-R	6-0	210	5/13/90	**BALTIMORE**	**8-2**	**3.13**	**66**	**0**	**0**	**74.2**	**59**	**36**	**96**
	Joe Gunkel	R-R	6-5	225	12/30/91	Norfolk (AAA)	8-11	4.08	24	24	0	141.1	156	18	94
						Bowie (AA)	0-3	3.66	4	4	0	19.2	26	3	15
58	Donnie Hart	L-L	5-11	180	9/6/90	**BALTIMORE**	**0-0**	**0.49**	**22**	**0**	**0**	**18.1**	**12**	**6**	**12**
						Bowie (AA)	3-1	2.72	40	0	4	46.1	41	7	50
31	Ubaldo Jimenez	R-R	6-5	210	1/22/84	**BALTIMORE**	**8-12**	**5.44**	**29**	**25**	**1**	**142.1**	**150**	**72**	**125**
62	Chris Lee	L-L	6-3	180	8/17/92	Bowie (AA)	5-0	2.98	8	7	0	51.1	41	13	19
	Jesus Liranzo	R-R	6-2	175	3/7/95	Bowie (AA)	1-1	3.38	11	0	0	18.2	8	12	20
						Delmarva (A)	0-0	1.05	16	0	0	34.1	12	15	46
66	T.J. McFarland	L-L	6-3	220	6/8/89	**BALTIMORE**	**2-2**	**6.93**	**16**	**0**	**0**	**24.2**	**33**	**10**	**7**
						Norfolk (AAA)	1-1	4.44	8	4	0	26.1	33	7	11
						Bowie (AA)	0-1	3.00	2	1	0	3.0	4	0	3
						Frederick (A)	0-0	19.29	2	2	0	2.1	7	1	4
						GCL Orioles (R)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	3.0	0	1	1
38	Wade Miley	L-L	6-0	220	11/13/86	**BALTIMORE**	**2-5**	**6.17**	**11**	**11**	**0**	**54.0**	**70**	**15**	**55**
						SEATTLE	**7-8**	**4.98**	**19**	**19**	**0**	**112.0**	**117**	**34**	**82**
						Everett (A)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	4.0	0	0	7
56	Darren O'Day	R-R	6-4	220	10/22/82	**BALTIMORE**	**3-1**	**3.77**	**34**	**0**	**3**	**31.0**	**25**	**13**	**38**
						Bowie (AA)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	1.0	1	0	2
	Logan Ondrusek	R-R	6-8	230	2/13/85	**BALTIMORE**	**0-0**	**9.95**	**7**	**0**	**0**	**6.1**	**9**	**3**	**4**
						Bowie (AA)	0-1	6.43	5	0	0	7.0	10	1	9
30	Chris Tillman	R-R	6-5	200	4/15/88	**BALTIMORE**	**16-6**	**3.77**	**30**	**30**	**0**	**172.0**	**155**	**66**	**140**
	Logan Verrett	R-R	6-2	190	6/19/90	**NEW YORK NL**	**3-8**	**5.20**	**35**	**12**	**0**	**91.2**	**100**	**43**	**66**
						Las Vegas (AAA)	2-0	1.50	2	2	0	12.0	8	8	5
63	Tyler Wilson	R-R	6-2	185	9/25/89	**BALTIMORE**	**4-6**	**5.27**	**24**	**13**	**0**	**94.0**	**110**	**24**	**55**
						Norfolk (AAA)	2-0	4.56	6	6	0	23.2	26	3	20
59	Mike Wright	R-R	6-6	215	1/3/90	**BALTIMORE**	**3-4**	**5.79**	**18**	**12**	**0**	**74.2**	**81**	**26**	**50**
						Norfolk (AAA)	4-4	3.07	13	13	0	76.1	72	14	48

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	Welington Castillo	R-R	5-10	220	4/24/87	**ARIZONA**	**.264**	**113**	**416**	**41**	**110**	**14**	**68**	**33**	**121**	**2**
36	Caleb Joseph	R-R	6-3	180	6/18/86	**BALTIMORE**	**.174**	**49**	**132**	**7**	**23**	**0**	**0**	**7**	**28**	**0**
						Norfolk (AAA)	.250	9	40	2	10	0	4	2	5	0
						Bowie (AA)	.286	6	21	2	6	1	2	1	7	0
						Frederick (A)	.294	6	17	4	5	1	5	2	4	0
27	Francisco Pena	R-R	6-2	230	10/12/89	**BALTIMORE**	**.200**	**14**	**40**	**5**	**8**	**1**	**3**	**2**	**14**	**0**
						Norfolk (AAA)	.246	54	191	17	47	4	23	15	25	0

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
19	Chris Davis	L-R	6-3	230	3/17/86	**BALTIMORE**	**.221**	**157**	**566**	**99**	**125**	**38**	**84**	**88**	**219**	**1**
3	Ryan Flaherty	L-R	6-3	220	7/27/86	**BALTIMORE**	**.217**	**74**	**157**	**16**	**34**	**3**	**15**	**17**	**48**	**2**
						Norfolk (AAA)	.421	5	19	3	8	0	1	3	5	0
2	J.J. Hardy	R-R	6-1	200	8/19/82	**BALTIMORE**	**.269**	**115**	**405**	**43**	**109**	**9**	**48**	**26**	**68**	**0**
						Bowie (AA)	.364	3	11	1	4	0	0	1	1	0
13	Manny Machado	R-R	6-3	185	7/6/92	**BALTIMORE**	**.294**	**157**	**640**	**105**	**188**	**37**	**96**	**48**	**120**	**0**
67	Trey Mancini	R-R	6-4	215	3/18/92	**BALTIMORE**	**.357**	**5**	**14**	**3**	**5**	**3**	**5**	**0**	**4**	**0**
						Norfolk (AAA)	.280	125	483	60	135	13	54	48	123	2
						Bowie (AA)	.302	17	63	18	19	7	14	10	17	0
6	Jonathan Schoop	R-R	6-1	225	10/16/91	**BALTIMORE**	**.267**	**162**	**615**	**82**	**164**	**25**	**82**	**21**	**137**	**1**

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
12	Dariel Alvarez	R-R	6-2	180	11/7/88	**BALTIMORE**	**.333**	**2**	**3**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**
						Norfolk (AAA)	.288	130	524	53	151	4	49	28	80	7
10	Adam Jones	R-R	6-2	215	8/1/85	**BALTIMORE**	**.265**	**152**	**619**	**86**	**164**	**29**	**83**	**39**	**115**	**2**
25	Hyun Soo Kim	L-R	6-2	210	1/12/88	**BALTIMORE**	**.302**	**95**	**305**	**36**	**92**	**6**	**22**	**36**	**51**	**1**
						Bowie (AA)	.286	2	7	1	2	1	2	0	2	0
23	Joey Rickard	R-L	6-1	185	5/21/91	**BALTIMORE**	**.268**	**85**	**257**	**32**	**69**	**5**	**19**	**18**	**54**	**4**
	Anthony Santander	S-R	6-2	190	10/19/94	Lynchburg (A)	.290	128	500	90	145	20	95	54	118	10
	Aneury Tavarez	L-R	5-9	175	4/14/92	Pawtucket (AAA)	.200	5	15	0	3	0	0	1	3	2
						Portland (AA)	.335	106	385	59	129	7	47	29	64	18
	Adam Walker	R-R	6-5	225	10/18/91	Rochester (AAA)	.243	132	478	61	116	27	75	44	202	7
34	Christian Walker	R-R	6-0	220	3/28/91	Norfolk (AAA)	.264	131	504	64	133	18	64	40	138	1

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

CODY SEDLOCK, RHP

The Orioles made Sedlock the 27th overall pick out of Illinois because they believed he could move quickly through the system and join the major-league rotation. They still hold the same thought. Named the Big Ten Pitcher of the Year in 2016, Sedlock posted a 3.00 ERA in nine starts at short-season Class A Aberdeen and is expected the begin the 2017 season at Low-A Delmarva. He allowed only one home run in 27 innings, but he also averaged 4.3 walks per nine innings. Sedlock's best pitch, per scouting reports, is a fastball with heavy sink from 91-93 mph that touches 96. He's carrying a four-pitch arsenal and is viewed as strong and durable by an organization that needs reinforcements.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Chance Sisco, C (22) Former South Atlantic League batting champion's offense is ahead of his defense, but he's working hard to improve behind the plate.

2. Cody Sedlock, RHP (21) The 2016 first rounder should move quickly after he begins 2017 at the Low-A level.

3. Ryan Mountcastle, SS (20) The 36th overall pick in the 2015 draft has demonstrated that he can hit, but his arm isn't suited for shortstop; he may move to the outfield.

4. Hunter Harvey, RHP (22) The only thing slowing the former first-round pick is his health. He underwent Tommy John surgery on his right elbow on July 26.

5. Trey Mancini, 1B (25) A former Orioles Minor League Player of the Year, Mancini hit three home runs in five games after a September promotion and is expected to break camp with the Orioles.

6. Keegan Akin, LHP (22) The second-round pick in 2016 actually fared better than Sedlock, allowing only three earned runs and striking out 29 in 26 innings at Aberdeen. Ended the season with 20 scoreless innings.

7. Austin Hays, OF (21) Third rounder in 2016 hit .336/.386/.514 with nine doubles, two triples, four home runs and 21 RBIs in 38 New York-Penn League games.

8. Jomar Reyes, 3B (20) Took a step back in 2016 with his average dropping from .278 at Low-A Delmarva to .228 at High-A Frederick and his OPS falling from .774 to .607.

9. Chris Lee, LHP (24) Lee may have been part of the Orioles' pitching staff last summer if not for a lat/shoulder injury that limited him to seven starts at Double-A Bowie.

10. Tanner Scott, LHP (22) Has a fastball that touches triple digits, but he has trouble locating it. Scott walked 42 batters in 48.1 innings at Frederick and 15 in 16 innings at Bowie.

BOSTON RED SOX

2017 PREDICTION
1st
AL East

2016 RECORD
93-69

HOME: 47-34 **ROAD:** 46-35

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

TEAM INFO

FENWAY PARK
Opened: 1912 **Capacity:** 37,493
Left: 310' **Center:** 390' **Right:** 302'
Tickets: 877-REDSOX9
boston.redsox.mlb.com

FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
OF Mookie Betts

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
LHP Chris Sale

BULL MARKET
LHP Eduardo Rodriguez

BEAR MARKET
RHP Steven Wright

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
3B Pablo Sandoval

IPO OF Andrew Benintendi

FUTURES MARKET 3B Rafael Devers

INSIDER TIP The Red Sox will rival the Cubs for commanding the most money at auction. If their top stars are too rich for your budget, hone in on Rodriguez, Drew Pomeranz and rookies Benintendi and Devers.

STATLINE

FEWEST TIMES SWUNG AT 1ST PITCHES: 2016

1. Red Sox	**511**
2. Twins	546
3. Mets	553
4. Pirates	573
5. Indians	575

The Red Sox spent years building for the future. Under Dave Dombrowski, however, they're acting as if the apocalypse is drawing near. Blessed with a young roster and loads of talent at the big-league level, Dombrowski is going for it in a big way. By trading away the top two remaining jewels of his farm system — Yoan Moncada and Michael Kopech — for former White Sox ace Chris Sale, he has opened what amounts to a three-year window of contention for a Red Sox club that's one of the favorites in the American League. If the Sox win a World Series, no one in Boston will complain. If they don't, we could look back at his aggressive dealing as the beginning of another dark age.

ROTATION Two short years ago, the Red Sox sent Clay Buchholz to the mound on Opening Day. Now they have their choice between Cy Youngs past (David Price), present (Rick Porcello) and future (Sale). Porcello made the leap in his second year with the Red Sox, winning the Cy Young Award on the strength of perhaps the most consistent season in baseball, but he's not even close to the most talented starter on the roster. That distinction belongs to Sale, who's working on four straight top-five finishes in the Cy Young voting but has yet to win the award. They're joined by Price, who knows he needs to be better than his middling debut. Talented lefthander Eduardo Rodriguez should claim the fourth spot, with the fifth coming down to All-Star knuckleballer Steven Wright and trade-deadline acquisition Drew Pomeranz, who's likely the slight favorite.

BULLPEN What manager John Farrell wouldn't give for a dependable eighth-inning option. That man looked like Koji Uehara last year, but then he got hurt and joined the Cubs in free agency. Farrell also shuffled through Matt Barnes, Junichi Tazawa, Brad Ziegler, Robbie Ross and Joe Kelly with inconsistent results. Now the Red Sox have former Brewers setup man Tyler Thornburg for the role, with the intriguing Kelly also in the mix. They'll set up All-Star closer Craig Kimbrel, who allowed just enough big hits to produce questions about his reliability in October. The rest of the pen will probably need some sorting out in spring training, and then into the season, with the loser of the fifth starter race joining the pen alongside lefty Fernando Abad and perhaps righty Heath Hembree, who's out of options.

MIDDLE INFIELD In a word: linchpins. The Red Sox are as strong up the middle as any team in the game, thanks to former MVP Dustin Pedroia at second and emerging star Xander Bogaerts at short. Pedroia authored one of the best seasons of his career, hitting .318 with an .825 OPS and finishing as a Gold Glove finalist. Bogaerts, meanwhile, mysteriously tailed off in the second half, but he still won his second straight Silver Slugger, and he's steady enough defensively, especially if he regains his form of 2015, to nail down shortstop for years to come. The two could pair atop the order, or Bogaerts could drop down to give length and balance to the lineup in the Nos. 5 or 6 holes.

CORNERS No one saw Hanley Ramirez coming, but he responded to questions about his commitment with a monster 30-100 season and acceptable defense at first base. He'll get the lion's share of the at-bats at DH this year, with Gold Glover Mitch Moreland starting at first against righties and Ramirez probably donning his glove against lefties. The real question comes across the diamond, where the decks have been cleared for underachieving veteran Pablo Sandoval to regain his starting job and erase the misery of his first two seasons in Boston. Whether Sandoval is up to the task remains to be seen, but he at least showed a commitment to weight loss in the offseason.

OUTFIELD The Red Sox outfield is the envy of baseball. Right fielder Mookie Betts won a Gold Glove and finished second in the MVP voting during a breakout 2016. A 30-30 season feels almost inevitable. Center fielder Jackie Bradley Jr. started the All-Star Game and erupted for 26 homers while slugging nearly .500. Then there's youngster Andrew Benintendi, who many scouts believe could win a batting title with his scything swing from the left side. He's also a center fielder by trade, which gives the Red Sox astounding outfield range and athleticism. We could be seeing a lot of Win, Dance, Repeat — the 20-something outfield's selfie-panto-miming victory celebration — in 2017.

CATCHING Here's where things get tricky. Each of the three catchers on the roster comes with questions. Surprise 2016 starter Sandy Leon hit .458 over his first month and .204 over his last one. After hitting .238 in 10 minor-league seasons and .184 in four prior big-league seasons, can he really be counted on to continue producing in a full-time role? Christian Vazquez brings a tremendous arm and reputation for great defense, but his bat lags considerably. Youngster Blake Swihart is an athletic marvel, but the Red Sox are returning him to catching, where he was a work in progress, after a

Betts: Tom DiPace; Rodriguez: AP Images

PROJECTED LINEUP

NEXT LEVEL

LINEUP

2B	Dustin Pedroia (R)
LF	Andrew Benintendi (L)
RF	**Mookie Betts (R)**
DH	Hanley Ramirez (R)
1B	Mitch Moreland (L)
SS	Xander Bogaerts (R)
CF	Jackie Bradley Jr. (L)
3B	Pablo Sandoval (S)
C	Sandy Leon (S)

Mookie Betts led baseball in Defensive Runs Saved by a wide margin; his 32 runs saved were 10 higher than second-place Adam Eaton of the White Sox.

BENCH

OF	**Chris Young (R)**
UT	Brock Holt (L)
C	Christian Vazquez (R)
INF	Josh Rutledge (R)

Chris Young hit a career-high .276 in his first year in Boston. He slugged .407 at home and .611 on the road.

ROTATION

LHP	Chris Sale
RHP	**Rick Porcello**
LHP	David Price
LHP	Eduardo Rodriguez
LHP	Drew Pomeranz

Rick Porcello's biggest step forward came in limiting walks. He posted a 3.6 percent walk rate after having a season below 5.0 percent only once before.

BULLPEN

RHP	**Craig Kimbrel (Closer)**
RHP	Tyler Thornburg
RHP	Joe Kelly
LHP	Robbie Ross
RHP	Matt Barnes
RHP	Steven Wright
LHP	Fernando Abad

Craig Kimbrel had a career-high 13.6 percent walk rate, which was worst in the American League and contributed to his ERA ballooning to a career-high 3.40.

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE RED SOX

"Losing David Ortiz is significant, and they have to sort out the catcher situation and hope that Pablo Sandoval can be his Giants self over at third base. But that's about all they have to worry about. Getting Chris Sale without giving up Mookie Betts or Jackie Bradley Jr. or Xander Bogaerts ... sure, they gave up top prospects, but this is Dave Dombrowski's history. When he has a chance, he goes for it, and you have to respect that. Sale assumes the mantel of the No. 1 starter, allowing David Price to be more of a 2, where I think he'll be better off. And if you put Rick Porcello in between those two lefties ... wow, is that good. Dustin Pedroia sets a great example, and Hanley Ramirez bought into being a professional last year. I like the young catcher, Christian Vazquez, too. He's been hurt, but he deserves a real chance to be the guy."

STATISTICIAN

3	Career home runs by dead-pull hitter Mookie Betts, out of 54, hit to either center (one) or right field (two).
17	Prospects traded by president of baseball operations Dave Dombrowski since he arrived in August 2015. He has received nine big leaguers in return.
26	Quality starts by Rick Porcello in 33 outings, one behind league leader Justin Verlander.
.049	Pablo Sandoval's average (2-for-41) batting right-handed in 2015, his last full season.
93.6	Career-low average fastball velocity for Chris Sale, down from 95.6 in 2015.
130	Runs created by David Ortiz in his farewell season that will need to be replaced.
.162	Batting average against for new setup man Tyler Thornburg in Milwaukee last year (.130 for lefties, .185 for righties).

MOOKIE BETTS

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3 PIT	4	5 PIT	6 PIT	7 DET	8 DET
9 DET	10 DET	11 BAL	12 BAL	13	14 TB	15 TB
16 TB	17 TB	18 TOR	19 TOR	20 TOR	21 BAL	22 BAL
23 BAL	24	25 NYY	26 NYY	27 NYY	28 CHC	29 CHC
30 CHC						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 BAL	2 BAL	3 BAL	4 BAL	5 MIN	6 MIN
7 MIN	8	9 MIL	10 MIL	11 MIL	12 TB	13 TB
14 TB	15	16 STL	17 STL	18 OAK	19 OAK	20 OAK
21 OAK	22	23 TEX	24 TEX	25 TEX	26 SEA	27 SEA
28 SEA	29 CWS	30 CWS	31 CWS			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 BAL	2 BAL	3 BAL
4 BAL	5	6 NYY	7 NYY	8 NYY	9 DET	10 DET
11 DET	12 PHI	13 PHI	14 PHI	15 PHI	16 HOU	17 HOU
18 HOU	19 KC	20 KC	21 KC	22	23 LAA	24 LAA
25 LAA	26 MIN	27 MIN	28 MIN	29 MIN	30 TOR	

July

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 TOR
2 TOR	3 TEX	4 TEX	5 TEX	6 TB	7 TB	8 TB
9 TB	10	11	12	13	14 NYY	15 NYY
16 NYY	17 TOR	18 TOR	19 TOR	20 TOR	21 LAA	22 LAA
23 LAA	24 SEA	25 SEA	26 SEA	27	28 KC	29 KC
30 KC	31 CLE					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 CLE	2 CLE	3 CWS	4 CWS	5 CWS
6 CWS	7	8 TB	9 TB	10	11 NYY	12 NYY
13 NYY	14	15 STL	16 STL	17	18 NYY	19 NYY
20 NYY	21 CLE	22 CLE	23 CLE	24 CLE	25 BAL	26 BAL
27 BAL	28 TOR	29 TOR	30 TOR	31 NYY		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 NYY	2 NYY
3 NYY	4 TOR	5 TOR	6 TOR	7	8 TB	9 TB
10 TB	11	12 OAK	13 OAK	14 OAK	15 TB	16 TB
17 TB	18 BAL	19 BAL	20 BAL	21	22 CIN	23 CIN
24 CIN	25 TOR	26 TOR	27 TOR	28 HOU	29 HOU	30 HOU
1 HOU						

disastrous stint in the outfield produced a season-ending ankle injury last year. Look for Leon and Vazquez to open the season in the big leagues.

DH/BENCH The Red Sox face a monumental task — replacing David Ortiz, who walked into the sunset with the greatest final season in history (.315-38-127). The bulk of his at-bats will likely go to Ramirez, who's a lifetime .331 hitter with a 1.014 OPS at DH. The rest of the bench will get used, with outfielder Chris Young DHing against lefties when Ramirez plays first, super-sub Brock Holt serving as third base insurance should Sandoval struggle, and Rule 5 pick Josh Rutledge providing right-handed options at third and in the middle infield.

MANAGEMENT If you only read the Boston papers or listened to the airwaves without actually seeing the results, you'd assume Farrell was the worst manager in baseball. But his young team played hard all season, particularly during an 11-game winning streak in September that salted away the division. Does Farrell get in his own way at times late in games? Perhaps. But Dombrowski is on record that he views in-game strategy as far less essential to a manager's job than the bigger-picture focus of keeping players pulling in the same direction over the course of 162 games, and on that count, Farrell delivers. As for Dombrowski, he has already proven that he will act decisively if the Red Sox need reinforcements in July, and he's not afraid to trade prospects.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Red Sox are all-in on 2017. Dombrowski has blown up the farm system to obtain All-Stars Kimbrel and Sale, and he won't hesitate to move more young talent if the Red Sox develop an obvious need before the trade deadline. Everyone from Dombrowski to Farrell to Price to young stars Bogaerts and Betts will be feeling the heat as the Red Sox attempt to win it all for the fourth time since 2004. Anything short of a World Series berth will feel like a disappointment.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

SPRING HOMECOMING Chris Sale's arrival in Boston is a homecoming of sorts. The Red Sox spend spring training in Fort Myers, where the Florida Gulf Coast University grad attended college and has since helped refurbish the baseball facilities. Sale is a resident of Naples, 35 miles south of JetBlue Park. He was driving on I-75 North between the two locations when he learned of the trade.

HOPING FOR THE BEST Last year, the Red Sox acquired a righthander with an unorthodox delivery, and Carson Smith didn't even survive spring training before blowing out his elbow. Could lightning strike again with Tyler Thornburg? In 2014, he eschewed Tommy John surgery in favor of rehab. "I was hoping it wouldn't haunt me, to be honest," Thornburg admits. He struggled through 2015, fearing reinjury, before excelling in 2016. "Everything worked out perfect," he says.

THINNER PANDA? Pablo Sandoval enters spring training as the starting third baseman. He posted Instagram photos and videos all offseason documenting his dramatic weight loss, but he regained the weight before arriving in Fort Myers. "No one's going to say the first two years of Pablo's tenure in Boston have gone well," manager John Farrell says. "Pablo's mindset is almost a redemption approach. It feels like he's got to make it up to his teammates and the fans of Boston."

TOUCHY At times, David Price appears obsessed with critical Red Sox fans, particularly on Twitter, where he regularly jostles with them. "Hatred from Boston fans ... that never happens," he tweeted at one, while he often "joked" with others about his poor postseason record, using the hashtag of #0–8, which is his record in playoff starts.

KATE PLUS HATE Rick Porcello was amused — and slightly confused — about the reaction of the supermodel fiancée of former teammate Justin Verlander, whom Porcello edged out for the Cy Young award. After Kate Upton directed an off-color insult at writers who overlooked the Tigers ace, Porcello took the high road. "I honestly don't care," he said, instead focusing on "drinking some really good bottles of wine" with his family.

HAIR CLUB There may not be a better marketing opportunity for a Red Sox player than Andrew Benintendi's hair. The budding young star already has heartthrob potential, in no small part because of his curly locks. "I feel like if I cut it, it might mess something up," Benintendi says. He nevertheless did trim it late last season so his cap would fit.

AP Images

RED SOX ROSTER

Pres. of Baseball Operations: Dave Dombrowski **Manager:** John Farrell **Coaches:** Ruben Amaro Jr (first base), Brian Bannister (asst. pitching), Brian Butterfield (third base), Chili Davis (hitting), Gary Disarcina (bench), Dana LeVangie (bullpen), Victor Rodriguez (asst. hitting), Carl Willis (pitching)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
58	Fernando Abad	L-L	6-1	220	12/17/85	**BOSTON**	**0-2**	**6.39**	**18**	**0**	**0**	**12.2**	**13**	**8**	**12**
						MINNESOTA	**1-4**	**2.65**	**39**	**0**	**1**	**34.0**	**27**	**14**	**29**
68	Matt Barnes	R-R	6-4	210	6/17/90	**BOSTON**	**4-3**	**4.05**	**62**	**0**	**1**	**66.2**	**62**	**31**	**71**
51	Roenis Elias	L-L	6-1	205	8/1/88	**BOSTON**	**0-1**	**12.91**	**3**	**1**	**0**	**7.2**	**15**	**5**	**3**
						Pawtucket (AAA)	10-5	3.60	21	19	0	125.0	115	57	113
37	Heath Hembree	R-R	6-4	210	1/13/89	**BOSTON**	**4-1**	**2.65**	**38**	**0**	**0**	**51.0**	**51**	**17**	**47**
						Pawtucket (AAA)	0-0	0.68	13	0	8	13.1	6	3	22
61	Brian Johnson	L-L	6-4	235	12/7/90	Pawtucket (AAA)	5-6	4.09	15	15	0	77.0	74	36	54
						Lowell (A)	0-0	0.00	2	2	0	11.0	7	2	11
56	Joe Kelly	R-R	6-1	190	6/9/88	**BOSTON**	**4-0**	**5.18**	**20**	**6**	**0**	**40.0**	**44**	**24**	**48**
						Pawtucket (AAA)	1-1	1.54	17	4	2	35.0	29	6	46
						Lowell (A)	0-0	4.50	3	0	0	4.0	4	1	5
46	Craig Kimbrel	R-R	6-0	210	5/28/88	**BOSTON**	**2-6**	**3.40**	**57**	**0**	**31**	**53.0**	**28**	**30**	**83**
	Kyle Martin	R-R	6-7	230	1/18/91	Pawtucket (AAA)	3-4	3.38	36	0	6	66.2	58	21	78
	Edgar Olmos	L-L	6-4	220	4/12/90	Norfolk (AAA)	4-4	2.88	42	0	0	68.2	63	28	76
60	Henry Owens	L-L	6-6	220	7/21/92	**BOSTON**	**0-2**	**6.95**	**5**	**5**	**0**	**22.0**	**23**	**20**	**21**
						Pawtucket (AAA)	10-7	3.53	24	24	0	137.2	107	81	135
31	Drew Pomeranz	R-L	6-6	240	11/22/88	**BOSTON**	**3-5**	**4.59**	**14**	**13**	**0**	**68.2**	**70**	**24**	**71**
						SAN DIEGO	**8-7**	**2.47**	**17**	**17**	**0**	**102.0**	**67**	**41**	**115**
22	Rick Porcello	R-R	6-5	205	12/27/88	**BOSTON**	**22-4**	**3.15**	**33**	**33**	**0**	**223.0**	**193**	**32**	**189**
24	David Price	L-L	6-5	215	8/26/85	**BOSTON**	**17-9**	**3.99**	**35**	**35**	**0**	**230.0**	**227**	**50**	**228**
66	Noe Ramirez	R-R	6-3	205	12/22/89	**BOSTON**	**0-0**	**6.23**	**14**	**0**	**0**	**13.0**	**16**	**8**	**15**
						Pawtucket (AAA)	2-3	1.85	30	0	7	43.2	39	11	54
52	Eduardo Rodriguez	L-L	6-2	220	4/7/93	**BOSTON**	**3-7**	**4.71**	**20**	**20**	**0**	**107.0**	**99**	**40**	**100**
						Pawtucket (AAA)	0-4	3.08	7	7	0	38.0	33	7	24
28	Robbie Ross Jr.	L-L	5-11	215	6/24/89	**BOSTON**	**3-2**	**3.25**	**54**	**0**	**0**	**55.1**	**47**	**23**	**56**
	Chris Sale	L-L	6-6	180	3/30/89	**CHICAGO AL**	**17-10**	**3.34**	**32**	**32**	**0**	**226.2**	**190**	**45**	**233**
72	Robby Scott	S-L	6-3	220	8/29/89	**BOSTON**	**1-0**	**0.00**	**7**	**0**	**0**	**6.0**	**6**	**2**	**5**
						Pawtucket (AAA)	4-3	2.54	32	6	0	78.0	57	14	73
39	Carson Smith	R-R	6-6	215	10/19/89	**BOSTON**	**0-0**	**0.00**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**2.2**	**2**	**1**	**2**
						Portland (AA)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	1.2	0	0	2
	Tyler Thornburg	R-R	5-11	190	9/29/88	**MILWAUKEE**	**8-5**	**2.15**	**67**	**0**	**13**	**67.0**	**38**	**25**	**90**
	Marcus Walden	R-R	6-0	195	9/13/88	Rochester (AAA)	1-1	2.54	36	0	5	46.0	41	13	33
						Chattanooga (AA)	0-0	1.74	6	0	1	10.1	3	3	7
67	Brandon Workman	R-R	6-5	235	8/13/88	Portland (AA)	0-0	9.00	4	0	0	10.0	15	7	5
						Lowell (A)	0-1	6.75	5	0	0	8.0	9	4	8
35	Steven Wright	R-R	6-2	215	8/30/84	**BOSTON**	**13-6**	**3.33**	**24**	**24**	**0**	**156.2**	**138**	**57**	**127**
	Luis Ysla	L-L	6-1	185	4/27/92	Pawtucket (AAA)	0-0	0.00	1	0	1	1.0	1	0	2
						Portland (AA)	2-5	4.07	39	0	3	55.1	54	27	60

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	Dan Butler	R-R	5-10	210	10/17/86	Pawtucket (AAA)	.308	48	146	14	45	3	16	20	34	0
	Jake DePew	R-R	6-1	210	3/1/92	Montgomery (AA)	.215	86	284	26	61	9	42	26	72	2
3	Sandy Leon	S-R	5-10	225	3/13/89	**BOSTON**	**.310**	**78**	**252**	**36**	**78**	**7**	**35**	**23**	**66**	**0**
						Pawtucket (AAA)	.243	36	115	12	28	2	13	11	24	0
23	Blake Swihart	S-R	6-1	200	4/3/92	**BOSTON**	**.258**	**19**	**62**	**9**	**16**	**0**	**5**	**11**	**17**	**0**
						Pawtucket (AAA)	.243	29	103	13	25	1	8	17	17	2
7	Christian Vazquez	R-R	5-9	195	8/21/90	**BOSTON**	**.227**	**57**	**172**	**21**	**39**	**1**	**12**	**10**	**39**	**0**
						Pawtucket (AAA)	.270	42	152	19	41	2	16	15	31	2

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
2	Xander Bogaerts	R-R	6-1	210	10/1/92	**BOSTON**	**.294**	**157**	**652**	**115**	**192**	**21**	**89**	**58**	**123**	**13**
	Matt Dominguez	R-R	6-2	220	8/28/89	**TORONTO**	**.000**	**5**	**11**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**3**	**0**
						Buffalo (AAA)	.269	127	475	47	128	18	67	29	70	1
41	Marco Hernandez	L-R	6-0	200	9/6/92	**BOSTON**	**.294**	**40**	**51**	**11**	**15**	**1**	**5**	**5**	**10**	**1**
						Pawtucket (AAA)	.309	57	223	26	69	5	29	12	51	4
16	Deven Marrero	R-R	6-1	195	8/25/90	**BOSTON**	**.083**	**13**	**12**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**2**	**5**	**0**
						Pawtucket (AAA)	.198	96	363	30	72	1	27	22	90	10
	Mitch Moreland	L-L	6-2	230	9/6/85	**TEXAS**	**.233**	**147**	**460**	**49**	**107**	**22**	**60**	**35**	**118**	**1**
15	Dustin Pedroia	R-R	5-9	175	8/17/83	**BOSTON**	**.318**	**154**	**633**	**105**	**201**	**15**	**74**	**61**	**73**	**7**
13	Hanley Ramirez	R-R	6-2	235	12/23/83	**BOSTON**	**.286**	**147**	**549**	**81**	**157**	**30**	**111**	**60**	**120**	**9**
	Josh Rutledge	R-R	6-1	190	4/21/89	**BOSTON**	**.265**	**28**	**49**	**9**	**13**	**0**	**3**	**6**	**19**	**2**
						Pawtucket (AAA)	.316	5	19	3	6	0	0	1	4	1
48	Pablo Sandoval	S-R	5-11	255	8/11/86	**BOSTON**	**.000**	**3**	**6**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**4**	**0**

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
40	Andrew Benintendi	L-L	5-10	170	7/6/94	**BOSTON**	**.295**	**34**	**105**	**16**	**31**	**2**	**14**	**10**	**25**	**1**
						Portland (AA)	.295	63	237	40	70	8	44	24	30	8
						Salem (A)	.341	34	135	30	46	1	32	15	9	8
50	Mookie Betts	R-R	5-9	180	10/7/92	**BOSTON**	**.318**	**158**	**672**	**122**	**214**	**31**	**113**	**49**	**80**	**26**
25	Jackie Bradley Jr.	L-R	5-10	200	4/19/90	**BOSTON**	**.267**	**156**	**558**	**94**	**149**	**26**	**87**	**63**	**143**	**9**
64	Bryce Brentz	R-R	6-0	210	12/30/88	**BOSTON**	**.279**	**25**	**61**	**8**	**17**	**1**	**7**	**3**	**17**	**0**
						Pawtucket (AAA)	.250	54	204	16	51	4	21	8	52	2
						Portland (AA)	.200	12	40	5	8	1	3	7	14	1
12	Brock Holt	L-R	5-10	180	6/11/88	**BOSTON**	**.255**	**94**	**290**	**45**	**74**	**7**	**34**	**27**	**58**	**4**
						Pawtucket (AAA)	.320	8	25	2	8	0	2	5	5	0
	Junior Lake	R-R	6-2	230	3/27/90	**TORONTO**	**.200**	**22**	**35**	**5**	**7**	**1**	**2**	**4**	**11**	**1**
						Buffalo (AAA)	.231	82	281	33	65	6	31	33	77	10
30	Chris Young	R-R	6-2	200	9/5/83	**BOSTON**	**.276**	**76**	**203**	**29**	**56**	**9**	**24**	**21**	**50**	**4**
						Pawtucket (AAA)	.217	7	23	2	5	0	2	1	7	0

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

JASON GROOME, LHP

The Red Sox targeted upside with their first pick, snaring Groome at No. 12 after other teams passed on the potential No. 1 overall pick because of character concerns. The 6'6" lefty has the stuff to be an ace — a fastball that already reaches 96 mph, a plus curveball, excellent command. Maturity remains a question after he decommitted from Vanderbilt during draft week and was embroiled in a transfer controversy during his senior year of high school. Regardless, the Red Sox believe Groome will ultimately prove a responsible professional with the potential to fill out an already impressive 220-pound frame and end up as a big-bodied Jon Lester type. Compared by some executives to Dodgers All-Star Clayton Kershaw at a similar age, Groome is a lifelong Red Sox fan (despite growing up in Yankees country) who's now clearly the best pitching prospect in the farm system.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Andrew Benintendi, OF (22) The team's 2015 first-round pick played well in a late-season call-up and figures to be a fixture in the Red Sox outfield for years to come.

2. Rafael Devers, 3B (20) The power-hitting Devers remains as the team's lone blue-chip prospect who has yet to reach the majors.

3. Jason Groome, LHP (18) The Red Sox would like to see him refine a changeup to join his excellent fastball and curve after he struck out 10 in 6.2 minor-league innings.

4. Sam Travis, 1B (23) Travis opened last season hoping to follow former Indiana teammate Kyle Schwarber to the bigs. Instead, they both rehabbed serious knee injuries.

5. Roniel Raudes, RHP (19) When asked by WEEI in Boston to name a high-ceiling pitching prospect Red Sox fans might not know, Dave Dombrowski immediately cited Raudes.

6. Bobby Dalbec, 3B (21) An accomplished pitcher at Arizona, Dalbec turned on the power at short-season Lowell, blasting seven homers in 34 games.

7. Brian Johnson, LHP (26) Johnson could add rotation depth after missing two months last season to treat anxiety. Not overpowering, but has good feel and command.

8. CJ Chatham, SS (22) Considered a better pitching recruit out of high school, Chatham has the glove to stick at short.

9. Josh Ockimey, 1B (21) Last year he combined power with selectivity at Low-A, hitting 18 homers with a career-best .364 OBP.

10. Nick Longhi, 1B (21) His quickest path to the majors might actually be in the outfield, where he has made 93 appearances since being drafted in 2013.

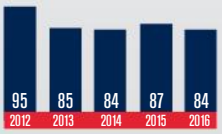
NEW YORK YANKEES

2017 PREDICTION
4th
AL East

2016 RECORD
84-78

HOME: 48-33 **ROAD:** 36-45

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND



TEAM INFO

YANKEE STADIUM
Opened: 2009 **Capacity:** 50,287
Left: 318' **Center:** 399' **Right:** 314'
Tickets: 718-293-6000
newyork.yankees.mlb.com

➤ FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
C Gary Sanchez

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
LHP Aroldis Chapman

BULL MARKET
1B Greg Bird

BEAR MARKET
OF Jacoby Ellsbury

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
DH Matt Holliday

IPO OF Aaron Judge

FUTURES MARKET SS Gleyber Torres

INSIDER TIP The rotation is too shallow for Luis Severino not to crack it. He presents a superior post-hype opportunity and may be the Yankees' No. 2 starter by July.

➤ STATLINE

FEWEST GAMES IN A SEASON WITH 3.0+ WAR

1.	Brett Lawrie, 2011 Blue Jays	43
2.	Willie McCovey, 1959 Giants	52
3.	**Gary Sanchez, 2016 Yankees**	**53**
4.	Nig Clarke, 1906 Indians	57
5t.	Bob Fisher, 1918 Cardinals	63
5t.	Lenny Dykstra, 1991 Phillies	63

Source: Baseball-Reference.com

It's been four years since the Yankees last won a playoff game. The icons of a previous dynasty are long gone, and the fruits of a much-improved farm system are on the way. For the time being, this is a team in transition, trying to contend in the short term while preparing for the long term. Recent spending has been relatively restrained while the organization has emphasized player development the past three years.

Whether the Yankees are a playoff team in 2017 will depend on the performance of young hitters in the middle of the order and young pitchers at the back of the rotation. The team has integrated younger talent in recent years, but never have the Yankees been this reliant on unproven players.

By selling at last year's trade deadline, general manager Brian Cashman built one of the top minor-league systems in baseball, but even he acknowledges that the Yankees are going to have to cross their fingers at many key spots this season.

ROTATION Masahiro Tanaka finished with a career-high 199.2 innings last season. He was third in the American League in ERA and received some down-ballot Cy Young votes. Tanaka eased health concerns to solidify himself as a legitimate No. 1 starter. But the rest of the Yankees' rotation is far less reliable. CC Sabathia is coming off a bounce-back year, but he turns 37 in July and is still pitching with a bad knee. Michael Pineda is just 28 and apparently healthy, but his 4.82 ERA was one of the worst in the majors last season. Nathan Eovaldi was lost to Tommy John surgery, leaving Sabathia and Pineda as the de facto Nos. 2 and 3 starters. The rest of the rotation will be decided by an open competition among at least a half dozen candidates, including former top pitching prospect Luis Severino, who looked dominant in 2015 but didn't win a single start in 2016. His future might be in the bullpen, but the Yankees are committed to giving him at least one more chance as a starter.

BULLPEN At last year's trade deadline, the Yankees traded Aroldis Chapman for a boatload of prospects. Five months later, they brought him back on a five-year, $86 million contract. With Chapman back as closer, Dellin Betances will step back into the setup role that made him an All-Star each of his three big-league seasons. Former closer Tyler Clippard is also returning as a third late-inning option, making the Yankees' bullpen a continued strength even without Andrew Miller. Manager Joe Girardi likes to keep his top relievers confined to relatively rigid roles, and he does that by leaning heavily on at least one versatile, multi-inning reliever. Several rotation candidates, particularly Severino and Warren, stand out as go-to options for that job. While the Yankees have been impressed by left-handed specialist Tommy Layne, the left side of the bullpen is a relative weakness. The team will once again count on a series of young relievers to shuttle back and forth to plug the bullpen gaps. September call-up Jonathan Holder was among the top relief pitchers in the minors last season and could get an early opportunity.

MIDDLE INFIELD Didi Gregorius and Starlin Castro were each buy-low trade acquisitions, and they tied for the team lead with 70 RBIs apiece last season. Gregorius isn't in the same class with Carlos Correa and Francisco Lindor, but he has emerged as a good two-way shortstop. He's a strong defender, and he's made significant offensive improvements against left-handed pitching. Castro was erratic in his first year with the Yankees, but he reached a career-high with 21 home runs while getting used to the second base position. The Yankees' minor-league system has considerable middle-infield depth, but most of that talent is at least a year or two away.

CORNERS If not for a shoulder surgery, Greg Bird might have taken the reins at first base last season. The 24-year-old left-handed hitter made a strong first impression in 2015, but he missed all of last season. He and right-handed Tyler Austin seem to be the top candidates to replace retired switch hitter Mark Teixeira. Bird and Austin have 16 career home runs between them; the Yankees will need them to provide some pop in the middle of the order. At third base, the Yankees are still committed to Chase Headley for two years. There isn't a ready replacement in the system, so the job is Headley's for better or for worse. Last season he had a .756 OPS in the five months after a brutal April.

OUTFIELD In each of the last two years, $153-million center fielder Jacoby Ellsbury has been outperformed by the similar-but-far-cheaper Brett Gardner, who just won his first Gold Glove in left field. Ellsbury and Gardner are poised to once again hit back to back at the top of the order, though another bout of inconsistency could lead Girardi to reconsider. The bigger question is what to do in right field. Last August, hulking prospect Aaron Judge made quite the first impression with a long home run in his first big-league at-bat, but he wound up hitting just .179 with far too many strikeouts. Aaron Hicks also underwhelmed

Chapman: AP Images; Sanchez: Tom DiPace

GARY SANCHEZ

PROJECTED LINEUP

LINEUP

LF	Brett Gardner (L)
CF	Jacoby Ellsbury (L)
C	Gary Sanchez (R)
1B	Greg Bird (L)
DH	Matt Holliday (R)
SS	**Didi Gregorius (L)**
2B	Starlin Castro (R)
3B	Chase Headley (S)
RF	Aaron Judge (R)

BENCH

C	Austin Romine (R)
OF	**Aaron Hicks (S)**
INF	Ronald Torreyes (R)
UT	Rob Refsnyder (R)

ROTATION

RHP	Masahiro Tanaka
LHP	CC Sabathia
RHP	**Michael Pineda**
RHP	Luis Severino
RHP	Luis Cessa

BULLPEN

LHP	Aroldis Chapman (closer)
RHP	**Dellin Betances**
RHP	Tyler Clippard
LHP	Tommy Layne
RHP	Adam Warren
RHP	Bryan Mitchell
RHP	Jonathan Holder

NEXT LEVEL

Didi Gregorius more than doubled his output from nine homers in 2015 to 20 homers last season. Although his 37.6 percent pull rate is below league average, all 20 homers were to right field.

Aaron Hicks was far more successful from the left side. However, he made far more hard contact from the right side (39.4 percent) than from the left (23.2).

Michael Pineda held opposing batters to a 70.9 percent contact rate, which paced the American League. This helped raise his strikeout rate from 23.4 percent to 27.4 percent.

Dellin Betances' 42.1 percent strikeout rate ranked behind only former teammate Andrew Miller among qualified relievers.

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE YANKEES

"Gary Sanchez is the real deal, but the other young guys all have a ways to go. Aaron Judge has a lot of holes in his swing, and he's got to do a better job recognizing the off-speed pitch. Tyler Austin's a big guy, but he's got to learn to make adjustments, too. I'd give Greg Bird a better chance of making it than those two. He's got great bat control. He gets himself in good counts. And he's short to the ball. They've also got to figure out who Luis Severino is: If they think he can be a 2 or a 3 in the rotation, leave him there. But if he's more of a back-end guy, then put him in that bullpen with Dellin Betances and Aroldis Chapman, and you'll shorten games even more. They need to do that, too, because the rotation's full of questions. At least by now they know who Michael Pineda is: consistently inconsistent."

STATISTICIAN

0	Number of Yankees starting pitchers who reached 200 innings in any of the past three seasons.
86	Years since Wally Berger hit 20 home runs in his first 51 games, a big-league record that Yankees rookie Gary Sanchez tied in 2016.
126	Strikeouts by Dellin Betances in 2016. He's led the majors in strikeouts by a reliever each of the past three seasons.
696	Career games in left field for Brett Gardner, fourth most at the position in Yankees history.
230	Days between the Yankees trading away Adam Warren on Dec. 8, 2015, and trading to get him back on July 25, 2016.
42	Career starts at first base for Greg Bird, making him the most experienced first baseman on the roster.
.320	Didi Gregorius' batting average against left-handed pitching last year. He struggled vs. lefties early in his career.

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2 TB	3	4 TB	5 TB	6	7 BAL	8 BAL
9 BAL	10 TB	11	12 TB	13 TB	14 STL	15 STL
16 STL	17 CWS	18 CWS	19 CWS	20	21 PIT	22 PIT
23 PIT	24	25 BOS	26 BOS	27 BOS	28 BAL	29 BAL
30 BAL						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 TOR	2 TOR	3 TOR	4	5 CHC	6 CHC
7 CHC	8 CIN	9 CIN	10	11 HOU	12 HOU	13 HOU
14 HOU	15	16 KC	17 KC	18 KC	19 TB	20 TB
21 TB	22 KC	23 KC	24 KC	25	26 OAK	27 OAK
28 OAK	29 BAL	30 BAL	31 BAL			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 TOR	2 TOR	3 TOR
4 TOR	5	6 BOS	7 BOS	8 BOS	9 BAL	10 BAL
11 BAL	12 LAA	13 LAA	14 LAA	15 OAK	16 OAK	17 OAK
18 OAK	19	20 LAA	21 LAA	22 LAA	23 TEX	24 TEX
25 TEX	26 CWS	27 CWS	28 CWS	29 CWS	30 HOU	

July

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 HOU
2 HOU	3 TOR	4 TOR	5 TOR	6	7 MIL	8 MIL
9 MIL	10	11	12	13	14 BOS	15 BOS
16 BOS	17 MIN	18 MIN	19 MIN	20 SEA	21 SEA	22 SEA
23 SEA	24	25 CIN	26 CIN	27 TB	28 TB	29 TB
30 TB	31 DET					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 DET	2 DET	3 CLE	4 CLE	5 CLE
6 CLE	7	8 TOR	9 TOR	10 TOR	11 BOS	12 BOS
13 BOS	14 NYM	15 NYM	16 NYM	17 NYM	18 BOS	19 BOS
20 BOS	21	22 DET	23 DET	24 DET	25 SEA	26 SEA
27 SEA	28 CLE	29 CLE	30 CLE	31 BOS		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 BOS	2 BOS
3 BOS	4 BAL	5 BAL	6 BAL	7	8 TEX	9 TEX
10 TEX	11 TB	12 TB	13 TB	14 BAL	15 BAL	16 BAL
17 BAL	18 MIN	19 MIN	20 MIN	21	22 TOR	23 TOR
24 TOR	25	26 TB	27 TB	28 TB	29 TOR	30 TOR
1 TOR						

in his first year with the Yankees. Those two seem to be the right field frontrunners, with Austin and Rob Refsnyder in the mix. Highly touted prospect Clint Frazier could be ready to play a role by midseason.

CATCHING After just two months in the majors, Gary Sanchez so thoroughly took hold of the catching job that the Yankees traded Brian McCann in the offseason. Sanchez hit 20 home runs in 53 games, one of the most dominant arrivals in franchise history. Sanchez will almost certainly hit either third or fourth. He just turned 24, and already the lineup revolves around him.

DH/BENCH With an opening at DH and a need to improve against left-handed pitching, the Yankees signed veteran Matt Holliday to a one-year, $13-million deal. He'll be the everyday DH and perhaps a backup option at first base. Even in a down year, Holliday's .782 OPS would have been second best in the Yankees' lineup last season. Catcher Austin Romine, infielder Ronald Torreyes and right field candidate Hicks seem poised to return to their bench roles from last season. Refsnyder and Austin could also bring some versatility and right-handed balance off the bench, while Mason Williams provides a speedy alternative to either Gardner or Ellsbury in the outfield. Frazier, Tyler Wade and Kyle Higashioka will be waiting for call-up opportunities.

MANAGEMENT For years, Girardi carried a reputation as a manager who leaned too heavily on veterans and stubbornly refused to play prospects. That reputation has somewhat faded in recent years, but this young roster still seems to be unlike any Girardi has managed since his debut with the Marlins in 2006. He will have to show patience in a win-now environment.

FINAL ANALYSIS If Sanchez is the real deal, Severino returns to form, Judge and Bird provide some power, and the rotation has enough depth, the Yankees could be a playoff contender with a bright future. If not, the growing pains could be ugly and again leave the Yankees sitting home in October.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

CHANGING OF THE GUARD CC Sabathia is in the final year of his contract, Michael Pineda is no longer arbitration eligible, and Masahiro Tanaka can opt out after this season. The Yankees are left to hope pitching prospects James Kaprielian, Justus Sheffield, Chance Adams and Jordan Montgomery will be ready to fill the void by 2018.

DRAFT TURNOVER In the past year, the Yankees have lost all but one of their top draft picks from 2009-14. The exception is 2011 first-rounder Dante Bichette, who's no longer considered a high-end prospect after struggling in Double-A. Slade Heathcott (2009) and Jacob Lindgren (2014) were released after suffering injuries. Eric Jagielo (2013) was traded, Cito Culver (2010) became a minor-league free agent, and Ty Hensley (2012) was lost in the Rule 5 Draft.

COSTLY ADVICE Released last season, Alex Rodriguez now works for the Yankees as a special advisor to owner Hal Steinbrenner. He's already been spotted at the team's minor-league complex working with the organization's top prospects. His playing contract ran through 2017, meaning that even though he's no longer on the roster, A-Rod's still owed $20 million for this season.

YOUTH MOVEMENT New designated hitter Matt Holliday will be the only Yankees player older than 36 at the start of spring training. He and Sabathia will be the only key players older than 33. Although they still have a reputation for an aging roster, the Yankees are projected to have no more than six or seven players in their 30s on Opening Day. The rest will be 20-somethings.

DISAPPOINTING FINISH Through Sept. 5 of last season, reliever Dellin Betances had a 2.05 ERA and held opponents to a .181 batting average. In his final nine appearances, though, Betances was knocked around to a 12.86 ERA and .333 opponents' batting average. It was the second year in a row his numbers were significantly worse in the final month of the year.

LEADERS OF THE PACK Manager Joe Girardi and general manager Brian Cashman are each in the final years of their contracts. Cashman took the job in 1998, making him baseball's longest-tenured current general manager. This will be Girardi's 10th season as manager. His 819 wins are the sixth most in franchise history, and he's the only current manager to have a winning record each of the past nine seasons.

Tom DiPace

YANKEES ROSTER

General Manager: Brian Cashman **Manager:** Joe Girardi **Coaches:** Alan Cockrell (hitting), Joe Espada (third base), Mike Harkey (bullpen), Tony Pena (first base), Larry Rothschild (pitching), Marcus Thames (asst. hitting), Rob Thomson (bench)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
	Johnny Barbato	R-R	6-1	236	7/11/92	**NEW YORK AL**	**1-2**	**7.62**	**13**	**0**	**0**	**13.0**	**13**	**5**	**15**
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	3-2	2.61	31	1	3	48.1	38	23	49
68	Dellin Betances	R-R	6-8	265	3/23/88	**NEW YORK AL**	**3-6**	**3.08**	**73**	**0**	**12**	**73.0**	**54**	**28**	**126**
54	Richard Bleier	L-L	6-3	215	4/16/87	**NEW YORK AL**	**0-0**	**1.96**	**23**	**0**	**0**	**23.0**	**20**	**4**	**13**
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	2-3	3.72	12	10	1	58.0	66	11	25
85	Luis Cessa	R-R	6-0	205	4/25/92	**NEW YORK AL**	**4-4**	**4.35**	**17**	**9**	**0**	**70.1**	**64**	**14**	**46**
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	6-3	3.03	15	14	0	77.1	66	23	69
54	Aroldis Chapman	L-L	6-4	215	2/28/88	**NEW YORK AL**	**3-0**	**2.01**	**31**	**0**	**20**	**31.1**	**20**	**8**	**44**
						CHICAGO NL	**1-1**	**1.01**	**28**	**0**	**16**	**26.2**	**12**	**10**	**46**
29	Tyler Clippard	R-R	6-3	200	2/14/85	**NEW YORK AL**	**2-3**	**2.49**	**29**	**0**	**2**	**25.1**	**20**	**11**	**26**
						ARIZONA	**2-3**	**4.30**	**40**	**0**	**1**	**37.2**	**34**	**15**	**46**
	Dietrich Enns	L-L	6-1	195	5/16/91	Scranton/WB (AAA)	7-2	1.52	14	10	1	65.0	47	26	50
						Trenton (AA)	7-2	1.93	12	12	0	70.0	55	30	74
	Giovanny Gallegos	R-R	6-2	210	8/14/91	Scranton/WB (AAA)	5-1	1.40	25	0	2	45.0	28	10	53
						Trenton (AA)	2-1	1.09	17	0	2	33.0	20	7	53
	Domingo German	R-R	6-2	175	8/4/92	Tampa (A)	0-2	3.04	5	5	0	23.2	26	9	20
						Charleston (A)	1-1	3.12	5	5	0	26.0	15	2	18
39	Chad Green	L-R	6-3	205	5/24/91	**NEW YORK AL**	**2-4**	**4.73**	**12**	**8**	**1**	**45.2**	**49**	**15**	**52**
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	7-6	1.52	16	16	0	94.2	68	21	100
61	Ben Heller	R-R	6-3	205	8/5/91	**NEW YORK AL**	**1-0**	**6.43**	**10**	**0**	**0**	**7.0**	**11**	**4**	**6**
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	0-1	1.42	6	0	1	6.1	3	2	7
						Columbus (AAA)	2-2	2.49	28	0	5	25.1	20	7	25
						Akron (AA)	1-0	0.55	15	0	7	16.1	3	5	23
	Ronald Herrera	R-R	5-11	185	5/3/95	Scranton/WB (AAA)	0-1	9.00	1	1	0	5.0	7	3	8
						Trenton (AA)	10-7	3.75	23	23	0	132.0	131	35	123
65	Jonathan Holder	R-R	6-2	235	6/9/93	**NEW YORK AL**	**0-0**	**5.40**	**8**	**0**	**0**	**8.1**	**8**	**4**	**5**
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	2-0	0.89	12	0	6	20.1	7	0	35
						Trenton (AA)	3-1	2.20	28	0	10	41.0	27	7	59
						Tampa (A)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	4.0	2	0	7
39	Tommy Layne	L-L	6-2	195	11/2/84	**NEW YORK AL**	**2-0**	**3.38**	**29**	**0**	**1**	**16.0**	**10**	**7**	**13**
						BOSTON	**0-1**	**3.77**	**34**	**0**	**0**	**28.2**	**27**	**14**	**25**
55	Bryan Mitchell	L-R	6-3	210	4/19/91	**NEW YORK AL**	**1-2**	**3.24**	**5**	**5**	**0**	**25.0**	**26**	**12**	**11**
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	0-0	1.00	2	2	0	9.0	8	2	14
						Trenton (AA)	0-1	5.40	2	2	0	6.2	6	3	6
						Tampa (A)	0-0	7.71	1	1	0	2.1	5	0	2
						Charleston (A)	0-0	9.00	1	1	0	3.0	3	0	2
35	Michael Pineda	R-R	6-7	260	1/18/89	**NEW YORK AL**	**6-12**	**4.82**	**32**	**32**	**0**	**175.2**	**184**	**53**	**207**
	Yefrey Ramirez	R-R	6-2	165	11/28/93	Tampa (A)	3-7	2.84	11	11	0	63.1	34	18	66
						Charleston (A)	4-2	2.80	11	11	0	61.0	48	14	66
52	CC Sabathia	L-L	6-6	300	7/21/80	**NEW YORK AL**	**9-12**	**3.91**	**30**	**30**	**0**	**179.2**	**172**	**65**	**152**
40	Luis Severino	R-R	6-2	215	2/20/94	**NEW YORK AL**	**3-8**	**5.83**	**22**	**11**	**0**	**71.0**	**78**	**25**	**66**
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	8-1	3.49	13	12	0	77.1	75	18	78
						Tampa (A)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	3.0	2	0	2
45	Chasen Shreve	L-L	6-4	195	7/12/90	**NEW YORK AL**	**2-1**	**5.18**	**37**	**0**	**1**	**33.0**	**29**	**13**	**33**
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	0-0	1.62	13	1	0	16.2	4	7	20
19	Masahiro Tanaka	R-R	6-3	215	11/1/88	**NEW YORK AL**	**14-4**	**3.07**	**31**	**31**	**0**	**199.2**	**179**	**36**	**165**
43	Adam Warren	R-R	6-1	224	8/25/87	**NEW YORK AL**	**4-2**	**3.26**	**29**	**0**	**0**	**30.1**	**28**	**10**	**25**
						CHICAGO NL	**3-2**	**5.91**	**29**	**1**	**0**	**35.0**	**31**	**19**	**27**
						Iowa (AAA)	0-0	4.15	2	2	0	8.2	6	4	6

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	Kyle Higashioka	R-R	6-1	200	4/20/90	Scranton/WB (AAA)	.250	39	148	24	37	10	30	12	31	0
						Trenton (AA)	.293	63	222	31	65	11	51	26	42	0
27	Austin Romine	R-R	6-1	220	11/22/88	**NEW YORK AL**	**.242**	**62**	**165**	**17**	**40**	**4**	**26**	**7**	**31**	**1**
24	Gary Sanchez	R-R	6-2	230	12/2/92	**NEW YORK AL**	**.299**	**53**	**201**	**34**	**60**	**20**	**42**	**24**	**57**	**1**
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	.282	71	284	39	80	10	50	21	45	7

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	Miguel Andujar	R-R	6-0	175	3/2/95	Trenton (AA)	.266	72	282	28	75	2	42	21	42	2
						Tampa (A)	.283	58	230	34	65	10	41	18	30	1
26	Tyler Austin	R-R	6-2	220	9/6/91	**NEW YORK AL**	**.241**	**31**	**83**	**7**	**20**	**5**	**12**	**7**	**36**	**1**
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	.323	57	201	39	65	13	49	32	59	5
						Trenton (AA)	.260	50	177	22	46	4	29	30	46	1
33	Greg Bird	L-R	6-4	220	11/9/92	Injured — Missed Season										
14	Starlin Castro	R-R	6-2	230	3/24/90	**NEW YORK AL**	**.270**	**151**	**577**	**63**	**156**	**21**	**70**	**24**	**118**	**4**
18	Didi Gregorius	L-R	6-3	205	2/18/90	**NEW YORK AL**	**.276**	**153**	**562**	**68**	**155**	**20**	**70**	**19**	**82**	**7**
12	Chase Headley	S-R	6-2	215	5/9/84	**NEW YORK AL**	**.253**	**140**	**467**	**58**	**118**	**14**	**51**	**51**	**118**	**8**
	Jorge Mateo	R-R	6-0	188	6/23/95	Tampa (A)	.254	113	464	65	118	8	47	33	108	36
38	Rob Refsnyder	R-R	6-0	200	3/26/91	**NEW YORK AL**	**250**	**58**	**152**	**25**	**38**	**0**	**12**	**18**	**30**	**2**
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	.316	54	209	25	66	2	20	17	30	6
	Ruben Tejada	R-R	5-11	200	10/27/89	**ST. LOUIS**	**.176**	**23**	**34**	**6**	**6**	**0**	**3**	**2**	**8**	**0**
						Springfield (AA)	.333	3	9	2	3	0	0	0	1	0
						SAN FRANCISCO	**.156**	**13**	**32**	**3**	**5**	**0**	**2**	**5**	**5**	**0**
						Sacramento (AAA)	.301	40	143	18	43	1	21	7	21	0
17	Ronald Torreyes	R-R	5-10	151	9/2/92	**NEW YORK AL**	**.258**	**72**	**155**	**20**	**40**	**1**	**12**	**10**	**20**	**2**

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
22	Jacoby Ellsbury	L-L	6-1	195	9/11/83	**NEW YORK AL**	**.263**	**148**	**551**	**71**	**145**	**9**	**56**	**54**	**84**	**20**
11	Brett Gardner	L-L	5-11	195	8/24/83	**NEW YORK AL**	**.261**	**148**	**547**	**80**	**143**	**7**	**41**	**70**	**106**	**16**
31	Aaron Hicks	S-R	6-1	202	10/2/89	**NEW YORK AL**	**.217**	**123**	**327**	**32**	**71**	**8**	**31**	**30**	**68**	**3**
	Matt Holliday	R-R	6-4	240	1/15/80	**ST. LOUIS**	**.246**	**110**	**382**	**48**	**94**	**20**	**62**	**35**	**71**	**0**
99	Arron Judge	R-R	6-7	282	4/26/92	**NEW YORK AL**	**.179**	**27**	**84**	**10**	**15**	**4**	**10**	**9**	**42**	**0**
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	.270	93	352	62	95	19	65	47	98	5
66	Mason Williams	L-R	6-1	185	8/21/91	**NEW YORK AL**	**.296**	**12**	**27**	**4**	**8**	**0**	**2**	**1**	**12**	**0**
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	.296	31	125	19	37	0	23	5	21	1
						Tampa (A)	.333	11	42	2	14	0	1	1	4	0

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

BLAKE RUTHERFORD, CF

Considered by many to be a top-10 draft prospect, Rutherford fell to the second half of the first round because of signability concerns (he signed to play at UCLA). The Yankees selected him 18th overall and gave Rutherford a $3,282,000 signing bonus, a franchise record for a drafted position player. Early returns were encouraging. The 19-year-old hit .351 with a .986 OPS in rookie ball before a minor hamstring injury cut his season short. His left-handed swing shows potential to hit for average and power, and he's polished for a player coming out of high school. Rutherford has enough speed to play center field, and even if he loses a step as he ages, scouts see plenty of offensive potential to profile as a corner outfielder. The Yankees recently have been more aggressive with prospect assignments, and Rutherford will likely open this season as the regular center fielder for Low-A Charleston.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Gleyber Torres, SS (20) Acquired from the Cubs in last year's Aroldis Chapman trade, Torres capped a strong regular season by becoming the youngest MVP in Arizona Fall League history.

2. Clint Frazier, OF (22) Struggled in his first taste of Triple-A and should return there to start this season. Draws raves for his bat speed and work ethic.

3. Jorge Mateo, SS (21) After a two-week suspension and a .685 OPS, Mateo is still considered a top prospect because of his elite speed, strong glove and productive bat.

4. Blake Rutherford, OF (19) Turns 20 in May and has the potential to move through the system quickly if he lives up to lofty potential.

5. Aaron Judge, OF (24) Hit just .179 in big-league debut, but has a history of struggling then improving with each move up the ladder.

6. James Kaprielian, RHP (23) First-round pick in 2015 made only three starts in 2016 before being shut down with an elbow injury. Looked sharp in the Arizona Fall League.

7. Justus Sheffield, LHP (20) Acquired with Frazier in last year's Andrew Miller trade, the lefty is somewhat undersized but has already pitched his way to Double-A.

8. Chance Adams, RHP (22) A breakout prospect last season, the former college reliever moved to the rotation and pitched to a 2.07 ERA in Double-A.

9. Dustin Fowler, OF (22) Does a little of everything, and improved defense suggests he could stick in center field.

10. Tyler Wade, SS (22) Limited power, but had a .352 on-base percentage with 27 stolen bases in Double-A last year.

TAMPA BAY RAYS

Back in the day, the Devil made them do it. But what possessed the 2016 version of the Rays to lose more games than in any year since the name truncation was an unholy amalgam of shoddy fundamentals, slapdash base running, leaky defense and patchy pitching. On paper, little has changed. That means either the Rays believe enough in their players to regard last year as an aberration, or their scarcity of resources make an upgrade impossible. They do have reason to believe in the starting rotation, which alone can make them respectable. As for the rest of it, Baseball Ops president Matt Silverman admitted to the *Tampa Bay Times*, "We don't and we can't and we won't, as people say, 'go all in.' That means you're trading your future." So for the present, that translates to another season in purgatory.

ROTATION Chris Archer threatened to join Nolan Ryan as the only pitcher ever to lead the AL in both defeats and strikeouts thanks to the gopher ball and meager support. A 3.11 ERA in his last 11 starts prompted manager Kevin Cash to predict that "a very elite pitcher" would emerge in 2017. Jake Odorizzi's weapons lack the sex appeal of Archer's 95-mph fastball and elite slider, and he's an extreme flyball pitcher who needs too many pitches to take care of business. If and when Alex Cobb can survive a full season (something the 29-year-old has yet to do), he has the pitching goods and clubhouse cachet to be the leader of the staff. Since posting a 2.82 ERA in 2013-14, he's been rehabbing an elbow. Drew Smyly's season was comprised alternately of dominance and disaster. His ERA was 7.40 over one 12-start stretch, but 3.36 in his 18 others. Although hyped lefty Blake Snell has yet to forge even a passing acquaintance with the strike zone, his raw stuff has not been overrated.

BULLPEN In both 2015 and 2016, Rays relievers led the majors in losses and ninth-inning home runs allowed, yet only two AL managers made the call to the pen more often than Cash. One pitcher the skipper came to summon with confidence was Alex Colome. Stepping in for injured defending AL save leader Brad Boxberger, the fastball/cutter specialist compiled a 1.36 ERA in his 40 save opportunities, converting 37. Getting to him was an adventure. The rest of the corps' homer-hammered earnie was 4.36. Matt Andriese, Erasmo Ramirez, Chase Whitley, Boxberger, Danny Farquhar and match-up southpaw Xavier Cedeno all had performed better in the past, lending hope for the future. The most intriguing newcomer is seed-slinging rookie Ryne Stanek.

MIDDLE INFIELD The good news was that the 2016 Rays were the second team in history to get a home run from six different shortstops in one season. That was also the bad news. With Brad Miller's defense no longer tenable, Cash shuffled bodies until pitcher Matt Moore was dealt to the Giants for long-term solution Matt Duffy. The 2015 NL Rookie of the Year runner-up (as a third baseman) grappled with a bum heel all year, but surgery has repaired the problem. Duffy is now a core player with a bat that plays well for the position and an unassailable glove. Partnering with him will be Logan Forsythe, who settled at second base after years of position-hopping. Like Duffy, he's neither a Silver Slugger nor Gold Glove candidate, but qualified across the board.

CORNERS Miller found an approach and surprised by jumping from 164th in the majors in homers to 31st. Of his 30, 22 were at The Trop. That's not an aberration; he can spin on a ball and go hard oppo with equal facility. Regrettably, his hands don't work as well at short as they do at the plate, precipitating a move to first base. Considering the team hasn't had a thumper there since Carlos Peña — and before him, Fred McGriff — the Rays don't see that as a concession. Evan Longoria was another player whose subtle adjustments paid off. He reversed his recent decline by becoming the first AL third baseman ever to amass at least 80 extra-base hits and commit fewer than 10 errors.

OUTFIELD As sound as the infield is, the guys behind them are, collectively, substandard. "Collectively" because Kevin Kiermaier is bedrock. "Nobody's gonna play center field like KK," lauds Cash, who calls it a "privilege" to watch him. "It's very tough to quantify what he does for us." He could start with a 12.8 WAR in 2015-16 that was 52 percent higher than any other Ray … or the 68 Defensive Runs Saved since 2014 that top the position by 28 … or the team's 14–34 record when he was out with a broken hand last year. The corners are, in the kindest word possible, "problematic." Athletic-but-unproductive right fielder Steven Souza Jr. rocked a swing-and-miss percentage of 32.9. Left fielder Corey Dickerson has power, but he's an out-making machine who must be platooned and is defensively suited for DH.

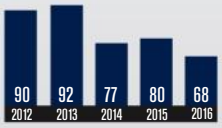
CATCHING When the Rays got priced out (as usual) of first-choice free agent Jason Castro, they signed Wilson Ramos, who is coming off an All-Star/Silver Slugger season. He was affordable only because he's also coming off major knee surgery and may

2017 PREDICTION
5th
AL East

2016 RECORD
68-94

HOME: 36-45 **ROAD:** 32-49

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND



TEAM INFO

TROPICANA FIELD
Opened: 1990 **Capacity:** 34,078
Left: 315' **Center:** 404' **Right:** 322'
Tickets: 888-326-7297
tampabay.rays.mlb.com

➤ FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
3B Evan Longoria

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
RHP Chris Archer

BULL MARKET
LHP Blake Snell

BEAR MARKET
OF/DH Corey Dickerson

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
C Wilson Ramos

IPO RHP Ryne Stanek

FUTURES MARKET SS Willy Adames

INSIDER TIP It's not hard to envision every member of the rotation stepping up his game a notch from 2016. Most should be priced to sell at auction, and if the team (as expected) adds a little offense, all the better.

➤ STATLINE

FEWEST STARTING PITCHERS USED: 2008-2016

1. Rays	**28**
2. Giants	32
3. Cardinals	38
4t. Brewers	39
4t. Indians	39

Tom DiPace

PROJECTED LINEUP

LINEUP

2B	Logan Forsythe (R)
CF	Kevin Kiermaier (L)
3B	Evan Longoria (R)
1B	**Brad Miller (L)**
SS	Matt Duffy (R)
LF	Corey Dickerson (L)
RF	Steven Souza Jr. (R)
DH	Nick Franklin (S)
C	Curt Casali (R)

BENCH

1B	Casey Gillaspie (S)
INF	Daniel Robertson (R)
OF	**Mikie Mahtook (R)**
C	Luke Maile (R)

ROTATION

RHP	Chris Archer
RHP	Jake Odorizzi
RHP	Alex Cobb
LHP	Drew Smyly
LHP	**Blake Snell**

BULLPEN

RHP	**Alex Colome (Closer)**
RHP	Brad Boxberger
RHP	Erasmo Ramirez
RHP	Matt Andriese
RHP	Ryne Stanek
LHP	Xavier Cedeno
LHP	Enny Romero

NEXT LEVEL

Brad Miller broke out to hit 30 home runs after hitting 29 homers in his first three seasons combined. His 20.4 percent home run per fly ball rate ranked 10th in the American League and 19th in baseball.

Mikie Mahtook's 34.7 percent strikeout rate was 1.8 points higher Chris Davis' 32.9, the highest rate among qualifiers.

Blake Snell walked 12.7 percent of the batters he faced over 89 IP. No qualified starter has had a walk rate that high since Edinson Volquez's 13.1 percent in 2012.

As Alex Colome transitioned to a full-time reliever, his strikeout rate rose (19.3 to 31.4 percent), average fastball velocity rose (94.1 to 94.7 mph) and contact rate dropped (76.6 to 69.3 percent).

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE RAYS

"They've got a lot of good arms — and they're smart to hold on to them, because that rotation is their best hope of contending. Chris Archer's still a top-of-the-rotation guy for me, and his contract is so good that it makes him a super-valuable asset. Their bullpen is very weak after Alex Colome, but I'd keep an eye on Ryne Stanek, who can touch triple-digits but without much deception. I think he could be an important back-end piece of that bullpen. The lineup can mash, and the infield especially is pretty talented, with Evan Longoria, Matt Duffy, Logan Forsythe and Brad Miller. Wilson Ramos will DH some as he comes back from the knee injury, but few catchers have the all-around impact he has. Kevin Kiermaier can really impact the game from center field in a way few others can. This is a deep-sleeper kind of team."

STATISTICIAN

1	MLB team — Tampa Bay — that voted against the new Collective Bargaining Agreement.
5	Players drafted ahead of Derek Jeter in 1992, one of whom was new Rays hitting coach Chad Mottola.
5	Consecutive years the Rays have finished last in attendance.
11	Walk-off home runs by opponents since the Rays last hit one in 2014.
18	Major leaguers who played in 2016 who were older than manager Kevin Cash.
116	Fewer pinch-hitters used by Tampa Bay in 2016 than in '15.
398	Consecutive starts by younger-than-30 pitchers (an MLB-high) entering the season.
100	Percent of Tampa Bay pitchers with more than one start in 2016 who posted a career-high rate of home runs allowed per nine innings.

EVAN LONGORIA

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2 NYY	3	4 NYY	5 NYY	6 TOR	7 TOR	8 TOR
9 TOR	10 NYY	11	12 NYY	13 NYY	14 BOS	15 BOS
16 BOS	17 BOS	18 DET	19 DET	20 DET	21 HOU	22 HOU
23 HOU	24 BAL	25 BAL	26 BAL	27	28 TOR	29 TOR
30 TOR						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 MIA	2 MIA	3 MIA	4 MIA	5 TOR	6 TOR
7 TOR	8 KC	9 KC	10 KC	11 KC	12 BOS	13 BOS
14 BOS	15 CLE	16 CLE	17 CLE	18	19 NYY	20 NYY
21 NYY	22 LAA	23 LAA	24 LAA	25 LAA	26 MIN	27 MIN
28 MIN	29 TEX	30 TEX	31 TEX			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2 SEA	3 SEA
4 SEA	5	6 CWS	7 CWS	8 CWS	9 OAK	10 OAK (2)
11 OAK	12	13 TOR	14 TOR	15 DET	16 DET	17 DET
18 DET	19 CIN	20 CIN	21 CIN	22	23 BAL	24 BAL
25 BAL	26	27 PIT	28 PIT	29 PIT	30 BAL	

July

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 BAL
2 BAL	3	4 CHC	5 CHC	6 BOS	7 BOS	8 BOS
9 BOS	10	11	12	13	14 LAA	15 LAA
16 LAA	17 OAK	18 OAK	19 OAK	20	21 TEX	22 TEX
23 TEX	24 BAL	25 BAL	26 BAL	27 NYY	28 NYY	29 NYY
30 NYY	31 HOU					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 HOU	2 HOU	3 HOU	4 MIL	5 MIL
6 MIL	7	8 BOS	9 BOS	10 CLE	11 CLE	12 CLE
13 CLE	14 TOR	15 TOR	16 TOR	17 TOR	18 SEA	19 SEA
20 SEA	21	22 TOR	23 TOR	24 TOR	25 STL	26 STL
27 STL	28 KC	29 KC	30 KC	31		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 CWS	2 CWS
3 CWS	4 MIN	5 MIN	6 MIN	7	8 BOS	9 BOS
10 BOS	11 NYY	12 NYY	13 NYY	14	15 BOS	16 BOS
17 BOS	18	19 CHC	20 CHC	21 BAL	22 BAL	23 BAL
24 BAL	25	26 NYY	27 NYY	28 NYY	29 BAL	30 BAL
1 BAL						

BRAD MILLER

miss the first couple months of his two-year pact. The stopgaps are Curt Casali and Luke Maile. The former rakes for distance but with infrequent contact; the latter has a defensive edge but can't hit a lick.

DH/BENCH The versatility of the bench compensates for its shallowness. One-time blue-chip shortstop prospect Nick Franklin now dabbles at most every position. He's not the optimal DH, but he's the best on board barring a belated pick-up or until Ramos can ease back into catching. Rookie Daniel Robertson and doghouse denizen Tim Beckham oil up all the infield mitts as well. The Rays hope 2014 No. 1 pick Casey Gillaspie breaks a streak of drafting bats that never develop. He might platoon with Miller at first base and/or challenge Franklin. Mikie Mahtook is available, but he hit below the Mendoza Line in 2016.

MANAGEMENT The soft underbelly of the strategy of trading established assets for prospect packages is that those deals yield exactly that — packages, not impact players. That, in concert with poor drafts and trade miscalculations, has made for a star-power deficit that has eroded results. With an eye toward addressing those insufficiencies, the front office was reorganized this winter to make Erik Neander the Rays' first traditional GM since 1995. Owner Stu Sternberg has termed Cash "a long, long-term guy."

FINAL ANALYSIS This is a crossroads season. Can the shuffled management team exhume the cash-strapped franchise's record of innovation and success, or was that a proprietary product of the predecessing Andrew Friedman/Joe Maddon dream team all along? To approach its potential this season, the team must unearth two more offensive hammers — an unlikely scenario even if any of the arm-for-bat trade opportunities it was seeking deep into the winter reaches fruition. Still, insists Silverman, "There's a lot to be optimistic about as we look towards 2017, and it begins with our starting pitching." Unfortunately, it may also end there.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

ARE WE HAVING FUN YET? At some point in the respective careers of Brent Honeywell and Bryce Harper, the two are likely to meet on the field. That should be interesting, since they've already met acrimoniously through social media. The Rays' top pitching prospect fanned the former MVP's controversial statements last spring about the game being a "tired sport," mocking Harper's "Make Baseball Fun Again" hat. "It sucks to see it because guys in MILB are workin to death to be in his shoes and he's basically complaining. Grow up," tweeted Honeywell, who then doubled down by tagging him.

WHAT IF THEY BUILT IT AND NO ONE CAME? A new stadium for the Rays seems closer than ever — which is to say, it's not even close. The interminable saga of where the team might play after beleaguered Tropicana Field is finally euthanized has at least advanced to the stage where Pinellas and Hillsborough counties are sparring with more specific site proposals. The club (which seems to favor downtown Tampa) even launched a website to solicit design and feature suggestions from fans at ballparkreimagined.com.

MONUMENT MAN Dan Johnson may never retire at this rate, but when he does, promises Stu Sternberg, the 16-year-pro will be immortalized with a statue outside of the park. The Rays owner tweeted the pledge in response to fan entreaties to honor Johnson who, despite negligible playing time, hit pivotal home runs in the team's dramatic runs to the 2008 and '11 postseasons. The ruddy-haired "Great Pumpkin," who has been acquired and emancipated by Tampa Bay three times, most recently signed with the Dodgers — as a knuckleball pitcher.

THE GAMBOA GAMBIT Speaking of knucklers, the pitch is becoming a something of a secret weapon in the Rays' developmental ranks. Since former flutterballer Charlie Haeger was hired as minor-league pitching coordinator, he's been identifying and tutoring several prospects who might need it to get them to The Show. His most promising pupil is Eddie Gamboa who, in September, became the team's second-oldest player to make an MLB debut, behind Jim "The Rookie" Morris. The 31-year-old, who was signed after eight years in the Orioles system, used the pitch to post a 2.68 ERA in Triple-A.

NO SOXCESS Chris Archer's team-record 19 losses included five to the Red Sox. He beat Boston in his fifth major-league outing five years ago but has not done so since, dropping 11 decisions in a row over 15 starts.

Tom DiPace

RAYS ROSTER

General Manager: Erik Neander **Manager:** Kevin Cash **Coaches:** Rocco Baldelli (first base), Stan Boroski (bullpen), Tom Foley (bench), Jim Hickey (pitching), Charlie Montoyo (third base), Chad Mottola (hitting), Jamie Nelson

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
	Jose Alvarado	L-L	6-0	240	5/21/95	Charlotte (A)	2-1	3.91	27	0	0	46.0	38	38	51
						Bowling Green (A)	2-0	1.46	10	0	2	24.2	12	17	34
35	Matt Andriese	R-R	6-3	215	8/28/89	**TAMPA BAY**	**8-8**	**4.37**	**29**	**19**	**1**	**127.2**	**131**	**25**	**109**
						Durham (AAA)	1-2	3.41	6	6	0	34.1	32	7	44
22	Chris Archer	R-R	6-3	190	9/26/88	**TAMPA BAY**	**9-19**	**4.02**	**33**	**33**	**0**	**201.1**	**183**	**67**	**233**
26	Brad Boxberger	R-R	6-2	225	5/27/88	**TAMPA BAY**	**4-3**	**4.81**	**27**	**0**	**0**	**24.1**	**23**	**19**	**22**
						Durham (AAA)	0-0	10.80	2	0	0	1.2	2	0	4
						Montgomery (AA)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	1.2	2	0	2
						Charlotte (A)	0-0	2.84	7	5	0	6.1	7	4	7
31	Xavier Cedeno	L-L	6-0	215	8/26/86	**TAMPA BAY**	**3-4**	**3.70**	**54**	**0**	**0**	**41.1**	**36**	**13**	**43**
53	Alex Cobb	R-R	6-3	205	10/7/87	**TAMPA BAY**	**1-2**	**8.59**	**5**	**5**	**0**	**22.0**	**32**	**7**	**16**
						Durham (AAA)	0-1	6.60	4	4	0	15.0	24	5	10
						Charlotte (A)	0-2	6.75	4	4	0	6.2	7	3	5
37	Alex Colome	R-R	6-2	220	12/31/88	**TAMPA BAY**	**2-4**	**1.91**	**57**	**0**	**37**	**56.2**	**43**	**15**	**71**
	Jacob Faria	R-R	6-4	200	7/30/93	Durham (AAA)	4-4	3.72	13	13	0	67.2	46	32	64
						Montgomery (AA)	1-6	4.21	14	14	0	83.1	64	36	93
43	Danny Farquhar	R-R	5-9	185	2/17/87	**TAMPA BAY**	**1-0**	**3.06**	**35**	**0**	**0**	**35.1**	**33**	**15**	**46**
						Durham (AAA)	4-2	3.32	32	0	2	38.0	33	9	24
49	Dylan Floro	L-R	6-2	175	12/27/90	**TAMPA BAY**	**0-1**	**4.20**	**12**	**0**	**0**	**15.0**	**23**	**5**	**14**
						Durham (AAA)	1-2	2.88	32	0	7	50.0	53	9	40
	Kevin Gadea	R-R	6-5	188	12/6/94	Clinton (A)	3-0	2.15	10	6	1	50.1	41	11	72
						AZL Mariners (R)	1-1	2.95	5	2	1	18.1	15	3	23
59	Eddie Gamboa	R-R	6-1	215	12/21/84	**TAMPA BAY**	**0-2**	**1.35**	**7**	**0**	**0**	**13.1**	**9**	**8**	**11**
						Durham (AAA)	6-4	2.68	27	12	0	94.0	65	39	89
52	Ryan Garton	R-R	5-11	185	12/5/89	**TAMPA BAY**	**1-2**	**4.35**	**37**	**0**	**1**	**39.1**	**44**	**11**	**33**
						Durham (AAA)	4-0	3.09	22	0	2	32.0	31	10	39
56	Taylor Guerrieri	R-R	6-3	195	12/1/92	Montgomery (AA)	12-6	3.76	28	26	1	146.0	130	46	89
	Chih-Wei Hu	R-R	6-1	230	11/4/93	Durham (AAA)	0-1	7.71	1	1	0	4.2	7	2	7
						Montgomery (AA)	7-8	2.59	24	24	0	142.2	128	36	107
23	Jake Odorizzi	R-R	6-2	190	3/27/90	**TAMPA BAY**	**10-6**	**3.69**	**33**	**33**	**0**	**187.2**	**170**	**54**	**166**
	Austin Pruitt	R-R	5-11	165	8/31/89	Durham (AAA)	8-11	3.76	28	28	0	162.2	166	27	149
30	Erasmo Ramirez	R-R	5-11	200	5/2/90	**TAMPA BAY**	**7-11**	**3.77**	**64**	**1**	**2**	**90.2**	**90**	**26**	**63**
45	Enny Romero	L-L	6-3	215	1/24/91	**TAMPA BAY**	**2-0**	**5.91**	**52**	**0**	**1**	**45.2**	**42**	**28**	**50**
						Charlotte (A)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	1.0	0	0	2
	Jaime Schultz	R-R	5-10	200	6/20/91	Durham (AAA)	5-7	3.58	27	27	0	130.2	113	68	163
33	Drew Smyly	L-L	6-3	190	6/13/89	**TAMPA BAY**	**7-12**	**4.88**	**30**	**30**	**0**	**175.1**	**174**	**49**	**167**
4	Blake Snell	L-L	6-4	180	12/4/92	**TAMPA BAY**	**6-8**	**3.54**	**19**	**19**	**0**	**89.0**	**93**	**51**	**98**
						Durham (AAA)	3-5	3.29	12	12	0	63.0	56	28	90
	Ryne Stanek	R-R	6-4	180	7/26/91	Durham (AAA)	2-4	5.92	16	0	1	24.1	22	13	22
						Montgomery (AA)	2-6	3.79	18	11	2	78.1	64	35	91
47	Chase Whitley	R-R	6-3	215	6/14/89	**TAMPA BAY**	**0-0**	**2.51**	**5**	**1**	**0**	**14.1**	**13**	**3**	**15**
						Montgomery (AA)	2-1	2.93	6	6	0	27.2	17	8	22
						Charlotte (A)	0-0	0.00	3	3	0	9.0	6	1	10
	Hunter Wood	R-R	6-1	175	8/12/93	Montgomery (AA)	6-2	3.28	10	9	0	49.1	36	20	49
						Charlotte (A)	3-3	1.70	11	9	0	63.2	34	24	56

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
19	Curt Casali	R-R	6-2	230	11/9/88	**TAMPA BAY**	**.186**	**84**	**226**	**23**	**42**	**8**	**25**	**25**	**82**	**0**
						Durham (AAA)	.254	20	63	5	16	2	15	15	12	0
46	Luke Maile	R-R	6-3	225	2/6/91	**TAMPA BAY**	**.227**	**42**	**119**	**10**	**27**	**3**	**15**	**4**	**36**	**0**
						Durham (AAA)	.242	58	194	13	47	2	12	16	36	0
	Wilson Ramos	R-R	6-1	255	8/10/87	**WASHINGTON**	**.307**	**131**	**482**	**58**	**148**	**22**	**80**	**35**	**79**	**0**

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	Willy Adames	R-R	6-1	180	9/2/95	Montgomery (AA)	.274	132	486	89	133	11	57	74	121	13
1	Tim Beckham	R-R	6-0	195	1/27/90	**TAMPA BAY**	**.247**	**64**	**198**	**25**	**49**	**5**	**16**	**14**	**67**	**2**
						Durham (AAA)	.158	5	19	0	3	0	0	1	7	0
5	Matt Duffy	R-R	6-2	170	1/15/91	**TAMPA BAY**	**.276**	**21**	**76**	**9**	**21**	**1**	**7**	**3**	**13**	**0**
						Durham (AAA)	.182	3	11	0	2	0	0	1	2	0
						Charlotte (A)	.500	2	6	0	3	0	1	0	0	0
						SAN FRANCISCO	**.253**	**70**	**257**	**32**	**65**	**4**	**21**	**20**	**40**	**8**
						Sacramento (AAA)	.333	2	6	2	2	0	1	1	1	0
11	Logan Forsythe	R-R	6-1	205	1/14/87	**TAMPA BAY**	**.264**	**127**	**511**	**76**	**135**	**20**	**52**	**46**	**127**	**6**
						Durham (AAA)	.400	2	5	1	2	1	1	1	0	1
	Casey Gillaspie	S-L	6-4	240	1/25/93	Durham (AAA)	.307	47	179	27	55	7	23	22	38	0
						Montgomery (AA)	.270	85	293	51	79	11	41	58	79	5
3	Evan Longoria	R-R	6-2	210	10/7/85	**TAMPA BAY**	**.273**	**160**	**633**	**81**	**173**	**36**	**98**	**42**	**144**	**0**
13	Brad Miller	L-R	6-2	200	10/18/89	**TAMPA BAY**	**.243**	**152**	**548**	**73**	**133**	**30**	**81**	**47**	**149**	**6**
	Daniel Robertson	R-R	6-1	205	3/22/94	Durham (AAA)	.259	118	436	50	113	5	43	58	100	2

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
10	Corey Dickerson	L-R	6-1	205	5/22/89	**TAMPA BAY**	**.245**	**148**	**510**	**57**	**125**	**24**	**70**	**33**	**134**	**0**
2	Nick Franklin	S-R	6-1	190	3/2/91	**TAMPA BAY**	**.270**	**60**	**174**	**18**	**47**	**6**	**26**	**12**	**42**	**6**
						Durham (AAA)	.254	64	240	26	61	5	28	26	56	10
						Charlotte (A)	.750	1	4	2	3	0	2	0	0	0
39	Kevin Kiermaier	L-R	6-1	215	4/22/90	**TAMPA BAY**	**.246**	**105**	**366**	**55**	**90**	**12**	**37**	**40**	**74**	**21**
						Charlotte (A)	.667	2	3	2	2	0	0	2	0	0
27	Mikie Mahtook	R-R	6-1	200	11/30/89	**TAMPA BAY**	**.195**	**65**	**185**	**16**	**36**	**3**	**11**	**7**	**68**	**0**
						Durham (AAA)	.305	27	105	16	32	1	7	12	24	5
						Charlotte (A)	.400	3	10	1	4	0	0	1	1	0
						GCL Rays (R)	.333	1	3	0	1	0	0	1	1	0
20	Steven Souza Jr.	R-R	6-4	225	4/24/89	**TAMPA BAY**	**.247**	**120**	**430**	**58**	**106**	**17**	**49**	**31**	**159**	**7**

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

JOSH LOWE, 3B/OF

The Rays aren't yet positive about what they have in Lowe beyond the obvious that he's tall and athletic. Several teams liked the Georgia High School Player of the Year's 95-mph heater more than his bat, but he played an error-inundated third base in rookie ball. He just turned 19, but since he'll be 25 when Evan Longoria's contract expires, he took some center field reps in instructional league. Although Lowe's defensive profile is hard to pigeonhole, the 13th overall pick's swing and approach are tailored for the long ball. He comes with the egregious swing-and-miss of most young power hitters, but his 37 walks in 214 plate appearances after signing imply an "idea." The son of a former Mariners draft pick who opted for the U.S. Naval Academy, Lowe is expected to be thrown into deep waters as one of the youngest players in the Midwest League this year.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Brent Honeywell, RHP (22) Honeywell struck out five of six batters he faced in the Fall Stars Game — two apiece on screwballs and fastballs, and one with a change-up.

2. Willy Adames, SS (21) Despite being the third-youngest player in his Double-A league when 2016 began, Adames outclassed most everyone in it with his tools and intangibles.

3. Adrian Rondon, 3B/SS (18) Tampa Bay's "can't-misses" end at Honeywell, but the next-highest ceiling belongs to Rondon, who is the most highly touted international prospect Tampa Bay has ever signed.

4. Jake Bauers, 1B/OF (21) Bauers' floor is James Loneyesque, but a .274-14-78 line with 78 walks against predominantly older pitchers in Double-A amplified the drumbeat.

5. Casey Gillaspie, 1B (24) Gillaspie's breakout came just in time. Once tackling higher levels, he led the system in homers (18), walks (80) and OPS (.866).

6. Josh Lowe, 3B/OF (19) In a system where a lot of perceived power has gone to die, Lowe is the next great hope.

7. Garrett Whitley, OF (20) Whitley is a traditional Rays "athlete working on becoming a baseball player." The 2015 first-rounder plays a speed-only game right now.

8. Jesus Sanchez, OF (19) Sanchez has done nothing but rake — .335 in summer ball, .323 in the Gulf Coast League and .347 in the Appy.

9. Ryne Stanek, RHP (25) Hip surgery and an inability to acquire a feel for starting relegated Stanek to the shadows for years.

10. Jacob Faria, RHP (23) To be anything more than a 4-5 in a rotation, he'll need to improve his pair of crooked pitches to go with his average velo and plus change-up.

TORONTO BLUE JAYS

Coming off consecutive trips to the American League Championship Series, the Toronto Blue Jays are a team that remains a contender, but also a club entering a period of transition. Back for 2017 is the majority of the pitching staff that led the junior circuit with a 3.78 ERA last year, along with cornerstones Josh Donaldson, Russell Martin and Troy Tulowitzki. They're now the foundation of the enterprise with Edwin Encarnacion gone. A lineup built around big power in recent years is sure to have a somewhat different identity now, with switch-hitter Kendrys Morales and Steve Pearce headlining the more notable reinforcements. Whether the revamped order can avoid the feast-or-famine nature of the offense in 2016 and better support a pitching staff that must repeat its dominance will be pivotal in deciding whether the Blue Jays can emerge from a deep AL East to make a third straight postseason appearance.

ROTATION Between Aaron Sanchez's development into a legitimate ace, J.A. Happ's steady brilliance, Marco Estrada's continued dominance and Marcus Stroman's 200 innings of stability, everything went right for the Blue Jays rotation last year. Can they do it again, or be even better? Francisco Liriano, acquired at the trade deadline to serve as a sixth starter, pitched well down the stretch after struggling with Pittsburgh and is likely to provide an upgrade over departed knuckleballer R.A. Dickey. Sanchez may just be scratching the surface, while Stroman is sure to benefit from going wire-to-wire for the first time. On the other hand, Happ, a 20-game winner, and Estrada, a first-time All-Star who posted a 3.48 ERA despite ongoing back woes, can't be asked for much more. Depth is a major concern.

BULLPEN After breaking in as a 20-year-old in 2015, closer Roberto Osuna followed up his splendid rookie season with an even better performance last year, collecting 36 saves in 42 chances while striking out 82 batters in 74 innings. The issue is that the Blue Jays lacked enough reliable setup men around him, so manager John Gibbons rode the righthander hard, which led to a few September blips. Complicating things is that longtime lefty setup man Brett Cecil and righty Joaquin Benoit departed as free agents, leaving Jason Grilli and Joe Biagini to do much of the heavy lifting. There's also opportunity for others, with big-stuff righties Bo Schultz, Ryan Tepera and Danny Barnes among those to watch. The Blue Jays also need lefty Aaron Loup to rebound from two subpar seasons.

MIDDLE INFIELD Tulowitzki's first full season with the Blue Jays was solid, as he continued to provide sublime defense, although his .761 OPS was roughly 100 points off his career average. Much of that can be attributed to a poor opening six weeks of the season. If he can extend his performance over the final four months to the full season in 2017, the Blue Jays won't feel Encarnacion's loss quite the same way. Second baseman Devon Travis will be Tulowitzki's partner up the middle as long as his surgically repaired right knee, the one he aggravated during the ALCS against Cleveland, holds up. Should he not be ready to go, the Blue Jays will turn to Darwin Barney and Ryan Goins to fill the void.

CORNERS The Blue Jays will need Donaldson to deliver another MVP-caliber season at the hot corner to keep their offense from taking a step back. A big question is whether he'll be pitched differently without Encarnacion batting behind him. Still, Encarnacion's loss will be felt far more heavily across the diamond, where Justin Smoak is set up to carry the majority of playing time, with Steve Pearce expected to split duties between first base and left field. The Blue Jays heavily value Smoak's defense at first, as his wingspan and ability to pick balls allow Donaldson and Tulowitzki more margin for error with their throws when making athletic plays. But Smoak's strikeout percentage spiked up to a career-high 32.8 percent, which is a cause for concern.

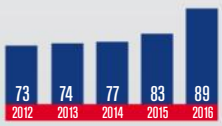
OUTFIELD Center fielder Kevin Pillar returns to anchor a group that remains a work in progress. At least one reinforcement was expected to join Pearce, Melvin Upton Jr. and Ezequiel Carrera, who give the Blue Jays some capable depth but not the proven production of free agents Jose Bautista (unsigned as of early January) and Michael Saunders. Pillar is among the game's most gifted defenders, but his OPS dipped from .713 in 2015 to .679 last year. He's heading into his age-28 season, and the Blue Jays are hoping there's still some upside for him at the plate. Pearce is a more proven offensive player, and his bat will get into the lineup regularly between left field and first base. Upton regained his power stroke last year, although his production dipped once the Blue Jays picked him up from San Diego. Carrera provided some big hits during a couple of extended stints in the lineup. Dalton Pompey is expected to open the season at Triple-A Buffalo as is fellow prospect Harold Ramirez, who could make his big-league debut next year.

2017 PREDICTION
3rd
AL East

2016 RECORD
89-73

HOME: 46-35 **ROAD:** 43-38

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND



TEAM INFO

ROGERS CENTRE
Opened: 1989 **Capacity:** 50,516
Left: 328' **Center:** 400' **Right:** 328'
Tickets: 416-341-1000
toronto.bluejays.mlb.com

➤ FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
3B Josh Donaldson

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
RHP Aaron Sanchez

BULL MARKET
RHP Marcus Stroman

BEAR MARKET
LHP J.A. Happ

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
2B Devon Travis

IPO C A.J. Jimenez

FUTURES MARKET OF Anthony Alford

INSIDER TIP Five-ninths of Toronto's projected lineup (OF, 1B, C) own a composite career batting average of .247 with fringe-average power. That inability to sequence the offense can exact a toll on Donaldson, Travis, Kendrys Morales and Troy Tulowitzki.

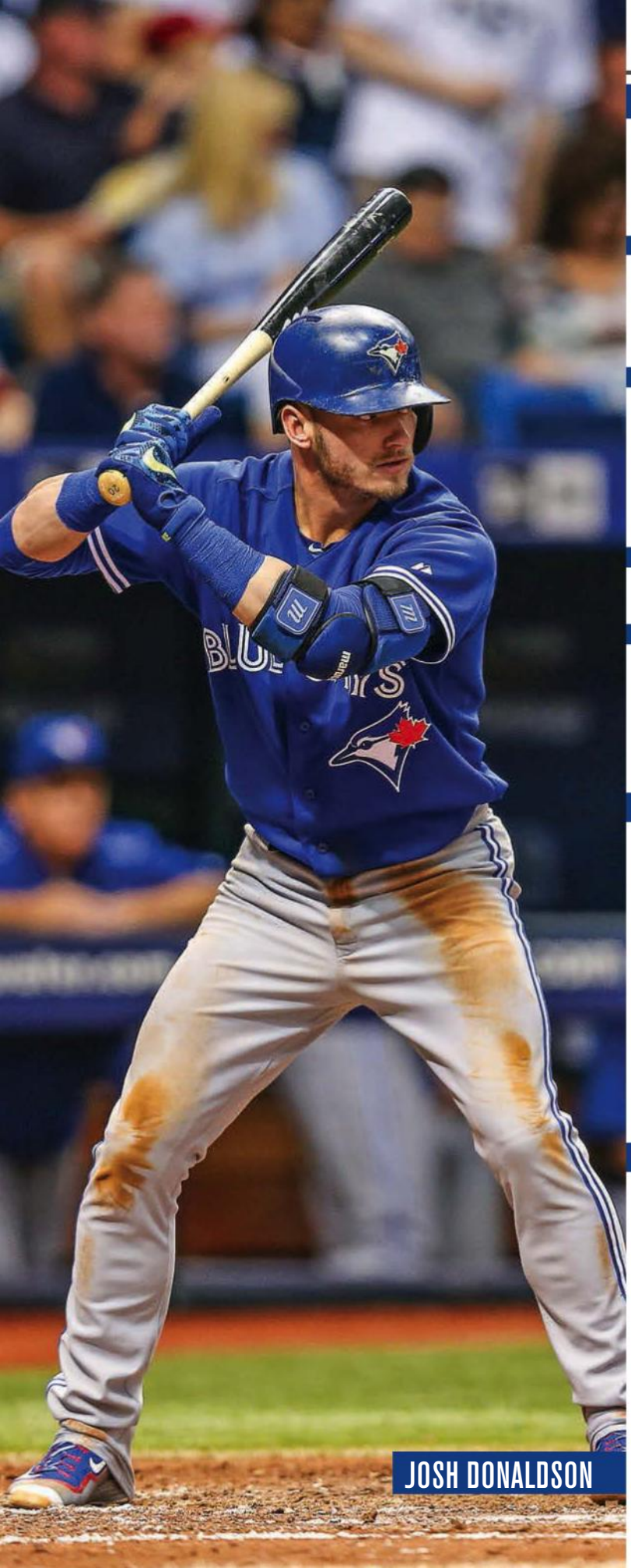
➤ STATLINE

% OF PITCHES THAT WERE FASTBALLS: 2016 AL

1. Aaron Sanchez, Blue Jays	**74.3**
2. J.A. Happ, Blue Jays	**73.5**
3. Jose Quintana, White Sox	66.5
4. Kevin Gausman, Orioles	66.3
5. Ian Kennedy, Royals	68.2

Source: Bill James Handbook

Donaldson: Tom DiPace; Sanchez: AP Images


JOSH DONALDSON

PROJECTED LINEUP

NEXT LEVEL

LINEUP

2B	Devon Travis (R)
3B	Josh Donaldson (R)
DH	Kendrys Morales (S)
SS	Troy Tulowitzki (R)
C	**Russell Martin (R)**
LF	Steve Pearce (R)
RF	Melvin Upton Jr. (R)
1B	Justin Smoak (S)
CF	Kevin Pillar (R)

BENCH

INF	**Darwin Barney (R)**
UT	Ryan Goins (L)
OF	Ezequiel Carrera (L)
C	A.J. Jimenez (R)

ROTATION

RHP	Aaron Sanchez
LHP	J.A. Happ
RHP	Marco Estrada
RHP	**Marcus Stroman**
LHP	Francisco Liriano

BULLPEN

RHP	**Roberto Osuna (Closer)**
RHP	Jason Grilli
RHP	Joe Biagini
LHP	Aaron Loup
RHP	Ryan Tepera
RHP	Mike Bolsinger
RHP	Bo Schultz

Russell Martin struck out a career-high 27.7 percent of the time. That mark is over six points higher than his previous worst, which helped lead to his .231 average, a three-year low.

Despite a very mediocre 86 wRC+ (weighted runs created) overall, Darwin Barney was excellent against lefthanders. He slashed .306/.361/.418 in 108 plate appearances.

Marcus Stroman paced MLB with a 60.1 percent ground ball rate. He limited batters to a .224 average on ground balls, which was 15 points below league average.

Roberto Osuna has a .247 BABIP over his first two major-league seasons, which ranks 10th lowest among relievers with at least 100 innings over that stretch.

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE BLUE JAYS

"The Cleveland guys in their front office are big on finding new ways to maximize performance — diet, exercise, sleep, things like that. They're very progressive. How that translates to the field, we don't know. They do tend to like platoons, so we'll see that in the outfield corners. And the Kendrys Morales signing was very sensible. They're very right-handed, and as a switch-hitter with power, he'll help balance that. They got Steve Pearce, too, and he's a versatile guy who can hit, but he's had arm issues, so that concerns me. They've got a lot of solid two-way guys like Josh Donaldson, Troy Tulowitzki, Kevin Pillar and Russell Martin, who does such a great job with that staff. If he can work his magic with Francisco Liriano and get him to throw strikes the way he did in Pittsburgh, that rotation is really strong 1 through 5."

STATISTICIAN

36	Days the Blue Jays spent in first place last year, the last coming Sept. 6.
.249	The Jays' average with runners in scoring position, 12th in the American League.
12	Straight starts in which Marco Estrada pitched at least six innings and allowed no more than five hits, a major-league record.
30.1	The average age of Blue Jays batters during the 2016 season, as calculated by Baseball Reference.
22	Blown saves by Blue Jays relievers, fourth in the American League.
7	Plate appearances by utilityman Andy Burns, the only rookie among Blue Jays position players in 2016.
56.1	Percent of the 221 Blue Jays home runs in 2016 that were solo shots.

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3 BAL	4	5 BAL	6 TB	7 TB	8 TB
9 TB	10	11 MIL	12 MIL	13 BAL	14 BAL	15 BAL
16 BAL	17	18 BOS	19 BOS	20 BOS	21 LAA	22 LAA
23 LAA	24 LAA	25 STL	26 STL	27 STL	28 TB	29 TB
30 TB						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 NYY	2 NYY	3 NYY	4	5 TB	6 TB
7 TB	8 CLE	9 CLE	10 CLE	11 SEA	12 SEA	13 SEA
14 SEA	15 ATL	16 ATL	17 ATL	18 ATL	19 BAL	20 BAL
21 BAL	22	23 MIL	24 MIL	25	26 TEX	27 TEX
28 TEX	29 CIN	30 CIN	31 CIN			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 NYY	2 NYY	3 NYY
4 NYY	5 OAK	6 OAK	7 OAK	8	9 SEA	10 SEA
11 SEA	12	13 TB	14 TB	15	16 CWS	17 CWS
18 CWS	19 TEX	20 TEX	21 TEX	22 TEX	23 KC	24 KC
25 KC	26	27 BAL	28 BAL	29 BAL	30 BOS	

July

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 BOS
2 BOS	3 NYY	4 NYY	5 NYY	6 HOU	7 HOU	8 HOU
9 HOU	10	11	12	13	14 DET	15 DET
16 DET	17 BOS	18 BOS	19 BOS	20 BOS	21 CLE	22 CLE
23 CLE	24 OAK	25 OAK	26 OAK	27 OAK	28 LAA	29 LAA
30 LAA	31 CWS					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 CWS	2 CWS	3	4 HOU	5 HOU
6 HOU	7	8 NYY	9 NYY	10 NYY	11 PIT	12 PIT
13 PIT	14 TB	15 TB	16 TB	17 TB	18 CHC	19 CHC
20 CHC	21	22 TB	23 TB	24 TB	25 MIN	26 MIN
27 MIN	28 BOS	29 BOS	30 BOS	31 BAL		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 BAL	2 BAL
3 BAL	4 BOS	5 BOS	6 BOS	7	8 DET	9 DET
10 DET	11 BAL	12 BAL	13 BAL	14 MIN	15 MIN	16 MIN
17 MIN	18	19 KC	20 KC	21 KC	22 NYY	23 NYY
24 NYY	25 BOS	26 BOS	27 BOS	28	29 NYY	30 NYY
1 NYY						

RUSSELL MARTIN

CATCHING Martin proved his worth time and again in 2016, and the Blue Jays can now better manage his playing time. How much of an adjustment is made to his workload — Martin's 1,069.1 innings caught ranked second in the AL last year — will depend on who ends up as his backup. Longtime farmhand A.J. Jimenez is in position to grab the role, but the Jays also will be hunting for an experienced upgrade.

DH/BENCH Morales takes over as the DH, and he should see his numbers tick up at hitter-friendly Rogers Centre and in the homer havens of the AL East. Too often, the Jays' right-handed-heavy lineup made it easy to plan for late in games for the opposing manager. Now with a productive switch-hitter in the heart of the order, opponents will have to burn more relief arms. With some combination of Pearce, Upton Jr., Smoak and Carrera on the bench, manager John Gibbons should have more matchup options.

MANAGEMENT The front office's failure to re-sign Encarnacion and the quick reallocation of his money to Morales and Pearce will be the prism through which much of this season is viewed. Succeed, and president Mark Shapiro and general manager Ross Atkins will be forgiven for allowing a franchise icon to depart. Fail, and their offseason will be held against them. Gibbons will likely be the one to bear most of the immediate fallout. He remains a holdover from the Alex Anthopoulos regime and is an obvious target if the team doesn't start strong, even after back-to-back appearances in the ALCS.

FINAL ANALYSIS The gap between the Blue Jays and Boston appears to only have widened. The Blue Jays will once again be heavily reliant on their pitching staff, and they'll have precious little margin for error on that front. And the new-look offense bears watching, as the Blue Jays can no longer count on being able to bludgeon opponents into submission. Still, they are too talented to count out, and another playoff berth is a realistic possibility.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

WHIFF-TASTIC The Blue Jays swung and missed a lot in 2016, and it's something that bears watching. Their 1,362 strikeouts last year were fourth most in the American League, 211 more than in 2015 with largely the same lineup. Opposing pitchers used offspeed offerings to great effect, and now it will be on the hitters to adjust.

CLOSE BUT NO CIGAR Given how strong their pitching was last year, one would expect the Blue Jays to have fared well in close, low-scoring games. But that wasn't the case, as they were 0–10 when scoring one run, 3–22 when scoring twice and only 11–14 when scoring three times. In combination with a 21–25 mark in one-run games and a 4–9 record in extra innings, this was an area where they left a lot of wins on the table.

CUBAN IMPORTS Before the Jays signed slugger Kendrys Morales and prospect Lourdes Gurriel Jr. in the same week during the offseason, they hadn't had a Cuban player since Yunel Escobar and Adeiny Hechavarria in 2012. Morales will play a significant role in 2017, while Gurriel is expected to open the season in the minors but could make a rapid rise. The Blue Jays plan to use Gurriel at second, shortstop and third in the minors, although he could also see time in the outfield.

WORKHORSE One of the reasons the Blue Jays were reluctant to let Aaron Sanchez start in 2016 was that he had thrown only 108.1 innings in 2015. He ended up logging 203.2 frames in '16, including the postseason, and the team won't be as overprotective with him in 2017. Now, rather than monitoring his in-season output, the Blue Jays are likely to build him up more slowly this spring, looking to conserve his arm for the season.

SWEET RELIEF Reliever Joe Biagini was a gift from the heavens for the Jays in 2016, and they're hoping lightning strikes again with another Rule 5 pick, Glenn Sparkman. The 24-year-old righthander, who returned from Tommy John surgery last year, will get a look as a reliever this spring, and the Blue Jays have shown they won't hesitate to keep him. Biagini threw 67.2 innings over 60 games, second only to closer Roberto Osuna.

PRICE OF ADMISSION The cost of Blue Jays tickets rose for the third straight year after five straight seasons of holding the line, and how that impacts attendance will be closely watched. The increase is part of a wider matrix restructuring in which the club moved to five game categories from the previous two, reorganized the seat map and upped the use of dynamic pricing for individual games.

AP Images

BLUE JAYS ROSTER

General Manager: Ross Atkins **Manager:** John Gibbons **Coaches:** DeMarlo Hale (bench), Brook Jacoby (hitting), Dane Johnson (bullpen), Tim Leiper (first base), Luis Rivera (third base), Derek Shelton (quality control), Pete Walker (pitching)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
24	Danny Barnes	L-R	6-1	195	10/21/89	**TORONTO**	**0-0**	**3.95**	**12**	**0**	**0**	**13.2**	**14**	**5**	**14**
						Buffalo (AAA)	1-0	0.35	17	0	5	25.2	6	2	37
						New Hampshire (AA)	2-1	1.01	24	0	1	35.2	17	4	40
31	Joe Biagini	R-R	6-5	240	5/29/90	**TORONTO**	**4-3**	**3.06**	**60**	**0**	**1**	**67.2**	**69**	**19**	**62**
49	Mike Bolsinger	R-R	6-1	215	1/29/88	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**1-4**	**6.83**	**6**	**6**	**0**	**27.2**	**33**	**9**	**25**
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	2-1	3.41	13	2	0	29.0	32	10	34
						Buffalo (AAA)	1-4	6.04	6	6	0	25.1	29	11	27
	Ryan Borucki	L-L	6-4	175	3/31/94	Dunedin (A)	1-4	14.40	6	6	0	20.0	40	12	10
						Lansing (A)	10-4	2.41	20	20	0	115.2	105	26	107
	Leonel Campos	R-R	6-2	215	7/17/87	**SAN DIEGO**	**1-0**	**5.73**	**18**	**0**	**0**	**22.0**	**18**	**14**	**24**
						El Paso (AAA)	2-1	4.32	37	0	1	50.0	47	30	62
50	Matt Dermody	R-L	6-5	190	7/4/90	**TORONTO**	**0-0**	**12.00**	**5**	**0**	**0**	**3.0**	**6**	**0**	**5**
						Buffalo (AAA)	0-0	2.76	15	0	0	16.1	22	5	6
						New Hampshire (AA)	2-0	0.92	16	0	0	19.2	12	2	21
						Dunedin (A)	1-1	1.96	16	0	3	18.1	21	1	20
25	Marco Estrada	R-R	6-0	200	7/5/83	**TORONTO**	**9-9**	**3.48**	**29**	**29**	**0**	**176.0**	**132**	**65**	**165**
57	Chad Girodo	L-L	6-1	190	2/6/91	**TORONTO**	**0-0**	**4.35**	**14**	**0**	**0**	**10.1**	**11**	**2**	**5**
						Buffalo (AAA)	2-1	3.79	29	0	1	35.2	45	13	24
37	Jason Grilli	R-R	6-5	235	11/11/76	**TORONTO**	**6-4**	**3.64**	**46**	**0**	**2**	**42.0**	**28**	**19**	**58**
						ATLANTA	**1-2**	**5.29**	**21**	**0**	**2**	**17.0**	**16**	**13**	**23**
33	J.A. Happ	L-L	6-5	205	10/19/82	**TORONTO**	**20-4**	**3.18**	**32**	**32**	**0**	**195.0**	**168**	**60**	**163**
	Dominic Leone	R-R	5-11	210	10/26/91	**ARIZONA**	**0-1**	**6.33**	**25**	**0**	**0**	**27.0**	**45**	**12**	**23**
						Reno (AAA)	5-2	3.34	33	0	1	35.0	25	11	36
45	Francisco Liriano	L-L	6-2	225	10/26/83	**TORONTO**	**2-2**	**2.92**	**10**	**8**	**0**	**49.1**	**42**	**16**	**52**
						PITTSBURGH	**6-11**	**5.46**	**21**	**21**	**0**	**113.2**	**115**	**69**	**116**
62	Aaron Loup	L-L	5-11	210	12/19/87	**TORONTO**	**0-0**	**5.02**	**21**	**0**	**0**	**14.1**	**15**	**4**	**15**
						Buffalo (AAA)	3-0	1.83	20	0	1	19.2	21	3	26
						Dunedin (A)	0-1	18.00	3	0	0	2.0	3	4	2
	Brett Oberholtzer	L-L	6-1	225	7/1/89	**PHILADELPHIA**	**2-2**	**4.83**	**26**	**0**	**1**	**50.1**	**58**	**20**	**38**
						LOS ANGELES AL	**1-1**	**8.55**	**11**	**2**	**0**	**20.0**	**27**	**9**	**16**
54	Roberto Osuna	R-R	6-2	215	2/7/95	**TORONTO**	**4-3**	**2.68**	**72**	**0**	**36**	**74.0**	**55**	**14**	**82**
41	Aaron Sanchez	R-R	6-4	220	7/1/92	**TORONTO**	**15-2**	**3.00**	**30**	**30**	**0**	**192.0**	**161**	**63**	**161**
47	Bo Schultz	R-R	6-3	230	9/25/85	**TORONTO**	**0-1**	**5.51**	**16**	**0**	**0**	**16.1**	**17**	**3**	**10**
						Buffalo (AAA)	3-2	3.74	26	0	2	33.2	30	7	21
						New Hampshire (AA)	0-0	10.80	2	0	0	1.2	2	2	3
						Dunedin (A)	0-0	10.13	3	0	0	2.2	4	3	3
35	Chris Smith	R-R	6-2	205	8/19/88	Buffalo (AAA)	0-1	2.45	4	0	0	3.2	2	1	5
						New Hampshire (AA)	1-2	1.89	43	0	15	57.0	44	21	76
	Glenn Sparkman	S-R	6-2	210	5/11/92	NW Arkansas (AA)	0-2	4.58	4	4	0	17.2	21	5	20
						Wilmington (A)	1-0	3.86	2	2	0	11.2	9	1	9
						Lexington (A)	0-2	6.91	3	3	0	14.1	21	3	19
						AZL Royals (R)	1-3	5.40	7	7	0	16.2	19	1	17
6	Marcus Stroman	R-R	5-8	180	5/1/91	**TORONTO**	**9-10**	**4.37**	**32**	**32**	**0**	**204.0**	**209**	**54**	**166**
52	Ryan Tepera	R-R	6-2	195	11/3/87	**TORONTO**	**0-1**	**2.95**	**20**	**0**	**0**	**18.1**	**17**	**8**	**18**
						Buffalo (AAA	1-2	2.58	37	0	18	45.1	33	16	48

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	A.J. Jimenez	R-R	6-0	195	5/1/90	Buffalo (AAA)	.241	67	228	24	55	4	28	13	33	1
55	Russell Martin	R-R	5-10	205	2/15/83	**TORONTO**	**.231**	**137**	**455**	**62**	**105**	**20**	**74**	**64**	**148**	**2**
	Mike Ohlman	R-R	6-5	240	12/14/90	Memphis (AAA)	.280	54	168	34	47	6	28	15	53	1
						Springfield (AA)	.301	24	83	9	25	1	16	10	19	0

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
18	Darwin Barney	R-R	5-10	180	11/8/85	**TORONTO**	**.269**	**104**	**279**	**35**	**75**	**4**	**19**	**22**	**48**	**2**
20	Josh Donaldson	R-R	6-1	210	12/8/85	**TORONTO**	**.284**	**155**	**577**	**122**	**164**	**37**	**99**	**109**	**119**	**7**
17	Ryan Goins	L-R	5-10	180	2/13/88	**TORONTO**	**.186**	**76**	**183**	**13**	**34**	**3**	**12**	**9**	**48**	**1**
						Buffalo (AAA)	.265	28	98	9	26	2	10	8	23	0
	Kendrys Morales	S-R	6-1	225	6/20/83	**KANSAS CITY**	**.263**	**154**	**558**	**65**	**147**	**30**	**93**	**48**	**120**	**0**
14	Justin Smoak	S-L	6-4	220	12/5/86	**TORONTO**	**.217**	**126**	**299**	**33**	**65**	**14**	**34**	**40**	**112**	**1**
29	Devon Travis	R-R	5-9	190	2/21/91	**TORONTO**	**.300**	**101**	**410**	**54**	**123**	**11**	**50**	**20**	**87**	**4**
						Buffalo (AAA)	.273	5	22	2	6	0	3	0	2	0
						Dunedin (A)	.357	4	14	1	5	0	5	1	1	0
2	Troy Tulowitzki	R-R	6-3	205	10/10/84	**TORONTO**	**.254**	**131**	**492**	**54**	**125**	**24**	**79**	**43**	**101**	**1**
	Richard Urena	S-R	6-0	185	2/26/96	New Hampshire (AA)	.266	30	124	14	33	0	18	4	19	0
						Dunedin (A)	.305	97	394	52	120	8	41	25	64	9

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	Anthony Alford	R-R	6-1	215	7/20/94	Dunedin (A)	.236	92	339	53	80	9	44	53	117	18
3	Ezequiel Carrera	L-L	5-11	185	6/11/87	**TORONTO**	**.248**	**110**	**270**	**47**	**67**	**6**	**23**	**27**	**70**	**7**
						Buffalo (AAA)	.071	4	14	1	1	0	0	2	4	0
9	Darrell Ceciliani	L-L	6-1	220	6/22/90	**TORONTO**	**.111**	**13**	**27**	**2**	**3**	**0**	**1**	**1**	**14**	**0**
						Buffalo (AAA)	.266	82	304	40	81	10	40	26	52	11
	Lourdes Gurriel	R-R	6-2	185	10/19/93	Did Not Play Professional Baseball										
	Steve Pearce	R-R	5-11	200	4/13/83	**TAMPA BAY**	**.309**	**60**	**204**	**26**	**63**	**10**	**29**	**26**	**40**	**0**
						BALTIMORE	**.217**	**25**	**60**	**9**	**13**	**3**	**6**	**8**	**14**	**0**
						Charlotte (A)	.429	2	7	2	3	0	0	1	0	0
11	Kevin Pillar	R-R	6-0	205	1/4/89	**TORONTO**	**.266**	**146**	**548**	**59**	**146**	**7**	**53**	**24**	**90**	**14**
						Dunedin (A)	.857	2	7	3	6	0	2	0	0	0
23	Dalton Pompey	S-R	6-2	195	12/11/92	**TORONTO**	**.000**	**8**	**2**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**2**
						Buffalo (AAA)	.270	93	337	48	91	4	28	40	72	18
	Harold Ramirez	R-R	5-10	220	9/6/94	Altoona (AA)	.306	98	379	58	116	2	49	21	66	7
7	Melvin Upton Jr.	R-R	6-3	185	8/21/84	**TORONTO**	**.196**	**57**	**148**	**18**	**29**	**4**	**16**	**14**	**49**	**7**
						SAN DIEGO	**.256**	**92**	**344**	**46**	**88**	**16**	**45**	**23**	**106**	**20**

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

T.J. ZEUCH, RHP

By design, the Blue Jays limited the workload on the 6'7", 225-pound righthander they selected 21st overall last summer, but they sure liked what they saw. In 34 innings over nine starts, Zeuch struck out 38 batters and walked just seven, while allowing 31 hits. Most of that work came at short-season Class-A Vancouver, with two starts at Low-A Lansing tacked on at the end, and it was clear that he could both command his fastball and use it to get outs. That's why he entered the offseason with a plan to focus on improving his changeup and refining his curveball, which was his out pitch at the University of Pittsburgh. He also planned to build strength after getting his first taste of the rigors of pitching every five days.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Vladimir Guerrero Jr., 3B (18) Had 106 total bases in 62 games with rookie-ball Bluefield to finish third in the Appalachian League as the loop's youngest player. Impressed the Jays with his work habits and skill.

2. Anthony Alford, CF (22) A knee injury and a concussion stalled his rapid progress, but he recovered to post a .722 OPS at High-A Dunedin. Posted a .789 OPS in the Arizona Fall League to earn All-Star honors.

3. Richard Urena, SS (21) Dominated at Dunedin, where he posted a .797 OPS in 97 games before getting promoted to Double-A New Hampshire, where his bat cooled a bit. Plays a mature shortstop.

4. Sean Reid-Foley, RHP (21) Challenged by the Blue Jays to use his overpowering fastball more effectively, he responded with 130 strikeouts in 115.1 innings at Lansing and Dunedin.

5. Rowdy Tellez, 1B (22) Impressed when he still continued to work walks despite starting slowly at Double-A. Ended up posting a .917 OPS in 124 games. Will open 2017 at Triple-A.

6. Conner Greene, RHP (22) Big-velocity righty continued to build physical base, throwing 146.1 innings between Dunedin and New Hampshire.

7. Justin Maese, RHP (20) A strike thrower with a power sinker, he made gains with his changeup. Jays like his poise on the mound.

8. Jon Harris, RHP (23) Productive year at Lansing before promotion to Dunedin. Added a two-seamer and emphasized changeup.

9. T.J. Zeuch, RHP (21) Blue Jays' 2016 first-rounder likely to start season at Lansing with a chance to move up the ladder quickly.

10. Bo Bichette, SS (19) Tore up rookie Gulf Coast League before an appendectomy cost him six weeks. Blue Jays excited about his athleticism and bat.

CHICAGO WHITE SOX

For the last three seasons, the debate around the White Sox was persistent: Was management reloading or retooling? Were the Sox contenders in need of a tweak or pretenders destined to stay on the wrong side of .500? After three years of being stuck in the middle, management finally made a call. Rebuild.

Goodbye, Chris Sale. Farewell, Adam Eaton. Hello, seven prospects who immediately upgraded the farm system from one of the 10 worst in baseball to one of the 10 best. Expect the Sox to make more moves during the spring and through the trading deadline. They likely won't contend until 2019. But at least they have settled on a direction.

ROTATION How do you replace a guy who made the last five American League All-Star teams while averaging 203 innings, 227 strikeouts, 14 victories and 5.5 wins above replacement value? Ask new manager Rick Renteria and Sox veteran pitching coach Don Cooper. That is their assignment after Sale was traded to Boston for four prospects. Jose Quintana has averaged better than 190 innings with a 3.41 earned run average for five seasons. That's ace territory, evidence Quintana deserves to be the No. 1 starter — if he isn't also dealt. Cooper believes Carlos Rodon has ace stuff, too; but Rodon must improve his command, trust his changeup and keep hitters in the park. Rodon was hurt by 23 home runs in 165 innings. The White Sox rotation has tilted heavily toward lefthanders in recent seasons. That won't change. Their primary free-agent signing was Derek Holland, who won seven games for the Rangers last season after missing most of 2014 and 2015 with knee and shoulder injuries. Miguel Gonzalez's 3.73 earned run average suggested that he pitched better than his 5–8 record. James Shields profiles as the fifth starter, but only because the Sox owe him half of the $44 million he is guaranteed on the final two years of his contract. Shields will be on a short leash as the Sox hope a young arm such as Lucas Giolito, Carson Fulmer, Reynaldo Lopez or Spencer Adams is ready, at least by midseason.

BULLPEN Does a team that's a long shot to make the postseason need an $11 million closer? Sox management must debate that question about David Robertson, who has two seasons left on his deal. He saved 37 games, but his walk ratio more than doubled and his strikeouts declined for the second consecutive season. Nate Jones looks primed to take over the ninth inning with his 100-mph fastball and crisp slider. His strikeout ratio and control were better than Robertson's last season. Dan Jennings emerged as a dependable lefty who could retire more than left-handed batters, allowing only one home run in 60.2 innings. Spring training will separate the rest. Zach Putnam and Jake Petricka are veteran righthanders trying to return from injuries. Chris Beck struggled in his three-month big-league debut. Tommy Kahnle throws hard but without command. Giovanni Soto and Brian Clark will get looks as the other left-handed options. One of the young righty starters, perhaps Lopez, might also fit here because Cooper likes giving new guys experience in the pen.

MIDDLE INFIELD Tim Anderson arrived ahead of schedule and immediately became the most encouraging story of the Sox season. In less than four months, Anderson scored 57 runs, delivered 37 extra-base hits, stole 10 bases and showed he could handle shortstop with range and reliability. Although he hit a respectable .283, Anderson must learn to control the strike zone to become an elite player. Renteria's biggest infield decision will be at second base — Brett Lawrie provides more power while Tyler Saladino has a better glove and more speed. Yoan Moncada, a flashy middle infielder acquired for Sale, has the bat and speed to force his way into the lineup by midseason.

CORNERS Third baseman Todd Frazier (40 home runs) and first baseman Jose Abreu (25) were the only consistent power threats, but management must decide if they'll be part of the rebuild. With one season on his contract, Frazier is most likely to be dealt because of his 163 strikeouts and Lawrie's ability to play third base. Abreu finished with his usual numbers, but most of his production came after the Sox fell out of contention. He pledged to become a better team leader, and Renteria will need that.

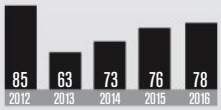
OUTFIELD Look for the Sox to pursue outfield prospects in deals as the rebuild continues. Melky Cabrera remains a professional hitter in left field, but he is a below-average defender in the final year of his contract. Translation: another trade candidate. If his torn hamstring is healed, Charlie Tilson profiles as the starting center fielder because of his plus speed and left-handed bat. He lacks power, so his strength must be his glove and ability to get on base. Acquired for Jake Peavy in 2013, Avisail Garcia has not developed as a run producer. Once a top Padres prospect, Rymer Liriano missed last season after being hit in the face with a pitch in spring training. His right field competition will be Jason Coats, who hit .330 in AAA.

2017 PREDICTION
4th
AL Central

2016 RECORD
78-84

HOME: 45-36 **ROAD:** 33-48

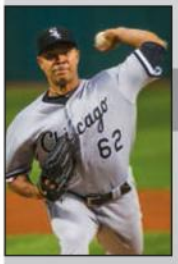
FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND



TEAM INFO

GUARANTEED RATE FIELD
Opened: 1991 **Capacity:** 40,165
Left: 330' **Center:** 400' **Right:** 335'
Tickets: 866-SOX-GAME
chicago.whitesox.mlb.com

➤ FANTASY TICKER



BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
1B Jose Abreu

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
LHP Jose Quintana

BULL MARKET
LHP Carlos Rodon

BEAR MARKET
2B Tyler Saladino

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
OF Rymer Liriano

IPO OF Charlie Tilson

FUTURES MARKET 2B/3B Yoan Moncada

INSIDER TIP Ignore White Sox starters beyond Quintana and Rodon. As many as four rookies — Lucas Giolito, Reynaldo Lopez, Michael Kopech and Carson Fulmer — will be in the rotation by August.

➤ STATLINE

LEAD-CHANGING RBIs: 2016

1t. Jose Abreu, White Sox	**42**
1t. Christian Yelich, Marlins	42
3t. Evan Longoria, Rays	41
3t. Albert Pujols, Angels	41
5. Daniel Murphy, Nationals	40

Qintana: AP Images; Abreu: Tom DiPace

JOSE ABREU

➤ PROJECTED LINEUP

NEXT LEVEL

LINEUP

SS	Tim Anderson (R)
LF	Melky Cabrera (S)
1B	Jose Abreu (R)
3B	**Todd Frazier (R)**
2B	Brett Lawrie (R)
DH	Avisail Garcia (R)
C	Omar Narvaez (L)
RF	Rymer Liriano (R)
CF	Charlie Tilson (L)

BENCH

3B	Matt Davidson (R)
INF	**Tyler Saladino (R)**
UT	Leury Garcia (S)
C	Kevan Smith (R)

ROTATION

LHP	Jose Quintana
LHP	Carlos Rodon
RHP	Miguel Gonzalez
LHP	Derek Holland
RHP	**James Shields**

BULLPEN

RHP	**David Robertson (Closer)**
RHP	Nate Jones
RHP	Jake Petricka
LHP	Dan Jennings
RHP	Zach Putnam
RHP	Dylan Covey
LHP	Giovanni Soto

Todd Frazier led baseball with a 18.5 percent infield fly ball rate, which was nearly a point higher than second place Xander Bogaerts. Those easy outs contributed to career-worst .225 batting average.

Tyler Saladino's 57 point rise in batting average to .282 came at the same time as his BABIP rose from .269 in 2015 to .329 in 2016.

When he left San Diego for Chicago, James Shields' strikeout rate dropped (20.1 to 14.5 percent) while his walk rate (9.5 to 10.2 percent) and home run rate (3.2 to 5.8 percent) rose.

David Robertson saw his walk rate more than double from 5.2 percent in 2015 to 12.0 percent last year. He walked at least 11.5 percent of batters in each of his first four career seasons.

➤ SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE WHITE SOX

"They're really trying to accelerate their rebuild, and you have to like what they're doing. Aggressively, the timetable for contending here is two years, but that's if they hit on everyone right away. And they could: You could imagine a really strong rotation with Michael Kopech, Lucas Giolito, Carlos Rodon, Reynaldo Lopez and Carson Fulmer. They should take their time, though, with those guys and Yoan Moncada. The Red Sox rushed him last year, but he's got a big, big upside especially at second base — think Robinson Cano, but a switch-hitter. One of the other young guys to watch is Charlie Tilson. He's got a good leadoff profile, a great combination of on-base, speed and defense; he should be their center fielder. Tim Anderson will have a big impact at shortstop. They're definitely a team in transition, but by the time they're done selling they should have a very strong foundation for a long time."

➤ STATISTICIAN

1 Complete games delivered last season by pitchers currently on the White Sox. (James Shields).

6 Game advantage the Sox had in the AL Central on May 9 after winning 23 of their first 33. They went 55–74 from that point.

7 Prospects the Sox received in trades for Chris Sale and Adam Eaton, including the top-rated players in the Red Sox and Nationals systems.

8 Seasons since the White Sox have made the postseason. Only the Mariners have a longer drought in the American League.

13 Walks that Tim Anderson drew in 431 plate appearances.

15 Seasons Don Cooper has completed as the White Sox pitching coach, the longest tenure in the American League.

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3 DET	4	5 DET	6 DET	7 MIN	8 MIN
9 MIN	10	11 CLE	12 CLE	13 CLE	14 MIN	15 MIN
16 MIN	17 NYY	18 NYY	19 NYY	20	21 CLE	22 CLE
23 CLE	24 KC	25 KC	26 KC	27	28 DET	29 DET
30 DET						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 KC	2 KC	3 KC	4 KC	5 BAL	6 BAL
7 BAL	8	9 MIN	10 MIN	11 MIN	12 SD	13 SD
14 SD	15 LAA	16 LAA	17 LAA	18 SEA	19 SEA	20 SEA
21 SEA	22 ARI	23 ARI	24 ARI	25	26 DET	27 DET
28 DET	29 BOS	30 BOS	31 BOS			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2 DET	3 DET
4 DET	5	6 TB	7 TB	8 TB	9 CLE	10 CLE
11 CLE	12 BAL	13 BAL	14 BAL	15 BAL	16 TOR	17 TOR
18 TOR	19	20 MIN	21 MIN	22 MIN	23 OAK	24 OAK
25 OAK	26 NYY	27 NYY	28 NYY	29 NYY	30 TEX	

July

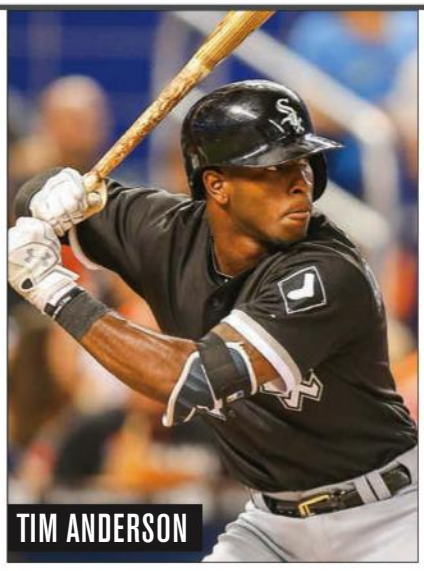
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 TEX
2 TEX	3 OAK	4 OAK	5 OAK	6	7 COL	8 COL
9 COL	10	11	12	13	14 SEA	15 SEA
16 SEA	17	18 LAD	19 LAD	20	21 KC	22 KC
23 KC	24 CHC	25 CHC	26 CHC	27 CHC	28 CLE	29 CLE
30 CLE	31 TOR					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 TOR	2 TOR	3 BOS	4 BOS	5 BOS
6 BOS	7	8 HOU	9 HOU	10 HOU	11 KC	12 KC
13 KC	14	15 LAD	16 LAD	17 TEX	18 TEX	19 TEX
20 TEX	21 MIN	22 MIN	23 MIN	24 MIN	25 DET	26 DET
27 DET	28	29 MIN	30 MIN	31 MIN		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 TB	2 TB
3 TB	4 CLE	5 CLE	6 CLE	7 CLE	8 SF	9 SF
10 SF	11 KC	12 KC	13 KC	14 DET	15 DET	16 DET
17 DET	18	19 HOU	20 HOU	21 HOU	22 KC	23 KC
24 KC	25 LAA	26 LAA	27 LAA	28 LAA	29 CLE	30 CLE
1 CLE						



CATCHING Help wanted. Omar Narvaez tops the Sox catching depth chart, and his record shows 117 MLB plate appearances and 10 career RBIs. His backup, Kevan Smith, is less experienced, showing two hits (both singles) and no RBIs in 16 big-league plate appearances. The Sox will be looking to add a veteran who can handle a pitching staff. Their catchers ranked among the worst in the American League in pitch framing last season.

DH/BENCH The Sox collapsed after their 23–10 start last season. Injuries and a thin bench ranked high on the list of reasons. Backup catcher Smith as well as infielder Matt Davidson and outfielder Coats are unproven big-league hitters. Leury Garcia brings speed and outfield/infield versatility but no pop. Infielder Carlos Sanchez is another good glove/no stick option. Saladino remains the best reserve, capable of playing every infield position as well as driving in runs. Adam Engel and Jacob May, both young outfielders, profile as outfield backups because of their speed and gloves.

MANAGEMENT Theo Epstein certified Renteria as a top managing candidate in 2014 because of his patient ability to work with young players as well as his bilingual skills. Those were the same attributes Sox general manager Rick Hahn lauded after promoting Renteria from bench coach to Robin Ventura's replacement. Cooper, the pitching coach since 2002, is energized by the assignment of remaking his starting staff and believes he can fix Shields during spring training. The focus this season will be on teaching, fundamentals and patience.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Sox won't contend in 2017, but at least there is a plan. Fans will be eager for the prospects acquired for Sale and Eaton to arrive and for even more trades as management sells the future. The Sox ranked 11th in the AL in runs scored last season, and the struggles will intensify as more veterans are traded. After years of patching holes, the rebuild is underway.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

NORTH SIDE/SOUTH SIDE Rick Renteria and Johnny Evers are the only men to manage both the Sox and Cubs. Evers made one stop with the Sox (1924) and managed the Cubs in 1913 and 1921. Renteria finished 73–89 in 2014, his sole season on the North Side. Theo Epstein did not replace him because of his losing record, however. He replaced Renteria because Joe Maddon became available.

FAMOUS FAMILY Lucas Giolito arrives from Washington with a reputation as one of the best pitching prospects in baseball. Giolito can also roll a string of Hollywood credits. His mother, Lindsay Frost, has appeared on shows such as "As the World Turns" and "Frasier." His uncle, Mark Frost, is a novelist who helped create the television series "Twin Peaks." Don't forget his grandfather, Warren Frost, 91, the gruff father of Susan Ross, the fiancé of George Costanza on "Seinfeld."

BIG JOB Chris Getz had little impact after arriving with the White Sox in 2008, billed as their next second baseman. He was traded to Kansas City and out of the big leagues by 2014. Getz returned to the Sox in November with tremendous responsibility to assist general manager Rick Hahn with the rebuild. Getz will serve as director of player development. His primary task will be to improve the Sox's record of producing everyday players from a sagging farm system. The Sox system has not produced position player All-Star since Joe Crede in 2008.

CUBAN CONNECTION The White Sox Cuban Connection began with Minnie Minoso in 1951. The 2005 World Series champs featured pitchers Jose Contreras and Orlando Hernandez. They were followed by shortstop Alexei Ramirez as well as outfielder Dayan Viciedo. Another Cuban, first baseman Jose Abreu, has been the Sox's best run producer the last three seasons. Hahn believes he has strengthened the Cuban Connection by acquiring infielder Yoan Moncada in the Chris Sale trade. Moncada has been ranked the top prospect in minor-league baseball by some.

FAMOUS FANS The White Sox can't match the Cubs in celebrity fans, but they do have star power. The most famous Sox fan is former President Obama, a friend of team executive vice president Kenny Williams. Chance the Rapper, a Chicago native, stepped forward as a major Sox fan last year. His July concert set an attendance record (47,754) at U.S. Cellular Field, but there's more. He partnered with New Era to design three special edition White Sox caps. The fitted edition of all three sold out in one day.

Tom DiPace

WHITE SOX ROSTER

General Manager: Rick Hahn **Manager:** Rick Renteria **Coaches:** Daryl Boston (first base), Nick Capra (third base), Don Cooper (pitching), Jerry Hairston (assistant), Curt Hasler (bullpen), Joe McEwing (bench), Greg Sparks (asst. hitting), Todd Steverson (hitting)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
54	Chris Beck	R-R	6-3	225	9/4/90	**CHICAGO AL**	**2-2**	**6.39**	**25**	**0**	**0**	**25.1**	**31**	**17**	**20**
						Charlotte (AAA)	5-4	4.21	22	7	0	66.1	77	25	50
	Dylan Covey	R-R	6-2	195	8/14/91	Midland (AA)	2-1	1.84	6	6	0	29.1	21	17	26
60	Tyler Danish	R-R	6-0	200	9/12/94	**CHICAGO AL**	**0-0**	**10.80**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**1.2**	**6**	**3**	**0**
						Charlotte (AAA)	1-3	5.83	7	5	0	29.1	39	10	21
						Birmingham (AA)	3-7	4.42	12	12	0	75.1	71	16	47
51	Carson Fulmer	R-R	6-0	195	12/13/93	**CHICAGO AL**	**0-2**	**8.49**	**8**	**0**	**0**	**11.2**	**12**	**7**	**10**
						Charlotte (AAA)	2-1	3.54	4	4	0	16.0	14	5	14
						Birmingham (AA)	4-9	4.76	17	17	0	87.0	82	51	90
	Lucas Giolito	R-R	6-6	255	7/14/94	**WASHINGTON**	**0-1**	**6.75**	**6**	**4**	**0**	**21.1**	**26**	**12**	**11**
						Syracuse (AAA)	1-2	2.17	7	7	0	37.1	31	10	40
						Harrisburg (AA)	5-3	3.17	14	14	0	71.0	67	34	72
						Hagerstown (A)	0-0	5.14	1	1	0	7.0	6	0	4
	Brad Goldberg	R-R	6-4	230	2/21/90	Charlotte (AAA)	3-5	2.84	43	0	10	50.2	42	23	44
						Birmingham (AA)	0-0	1.50	4	0	0	6.0	4	3	7
58	Miguel Gonzalez	R-R	6-1	170	5/27/84	**CHICAGO AL**	**5-8**	**3.73**	**24**	**23**	**0**	**135.0**	**132**	**35**	**95**
						Charlotte (AAA)	1-1	4.64	5	5	0	21.1	27	4	25
	Derek Holland	S-L	6-2	215	10/9/86	**TEXAS**	**7-9**	**4.95**	**22**	**20**	**0**	**107.1**	**116**	**35**	**67**
						Round Rock (AAA)	0-0	4.50	3	3	0	10.0	11	4	8
43	Dan Jennings	L-L	6-3	210	4/17/87	**CHICAGO AL**	**4-3**	**2.08**	**64**	**0**	**1**	**60.2**	**57**	**28**	**46**
65	Nate Jones	R-R	6-5	220	1/28/86	**CHICAGO AL**	**5-3**	**2.29**	**71**	**0**	**3**	**70.2**	**48**	**15**	**80**
48	Tommy Kahnle	R-R	6-1	235	8/7/89	**CHICAGO AL**	**0-1**	**2.63**	**29**	**0**	**1**	**27.1**	**21**	**20**	**25**
						Charlotte (AAA)	1-1	3.00	23	0	0	27.0	17	12	36
	Reynaldo Lopez	R-R	6-0	185	1/4/94	**WASHINGTON**	**5-3**	**4.91**	**11**	**6**	**0**	**44.0**	**47**	**22**	**42**
						Syracuse (AAA)	2-2	3.27	5	5	0	33.0	21	10	26
						Harrisburg (AA)	3-5	3.18	14	14	0	76.1	69	25	100
67	Juan Minaya	R-R	6-4	210	9/18/90	**CHICAGO AL**	**1-0**	**4.35**	**11**	**0**	**0**	**10.1**	**10**	**5**	**6**
						Charlotte (AAA)	4-3	3.38	17	0	1	26.2	23	10	28
						Fresno (AAA)	1-3	3.91	17	0	0	25.1	25	10	19
52	Jake Petricka	R-R	6-5	220	6/5/88	**CHICAGO AL**	**0-0**	**4.50**	**9**	**0**	**0**	**8.0**	**8**	**8**	**7**
57	Zach Putnam	R-R	6-2	220	7/3/87	**CHICAGO AL**	**1-0**	**2.30**	**25**	**0**	**0**	**27.1**	**25**	**11**	**30**
62	Jose Quintana	R-L	6-1	220	1/24/89	**CHICAGO AL**	**13-12**	**3.20**	**32**	**32**	**0**	**208.0**	**192**	**50**	**181**
30	David Robertson	R-R	5-11	195	4/9/85	**CHICAGO AL**	**5-3**	**3.47**	**62**	**0**	**37**	**62.1**	**53**	**32**	**75**
55	Carlos Rodon	L-L	6-3	235	12/10/92	**CHICAGO AL**	**9-10**	**4.04**	**28**	**28**	**0**	**165.0**	**176**	**54**	**168**
						Charlotte (AAA)	0-1	4.91	1	1	0	3.2	5	2	3
25	James Shields	R-R	6-3	212	12/20/81	**CHICAGO AL**	**4-12**	**6.77**	**22**	**22**	**0**	**114.1**	**139**	**55**	**78**
						SAN DIEGO	**2-7**	**4.28**	**11**	**11**	**0**	**67.1**	**69**	**27**	**57**
68	Blake Smith	L-R	6-2	220	12/9/87	**CHICAGO AL**	**0-0**	**6.23**	**5**	**0**	**0**	**4.1**	**7**	**0**	**1**
						Charlotte (AAA)	3-1	3.53	39	0	1	71.1	64	24	75
	Giovanni Soto	L-L	6-2	210	5/18/91	Iowa (AAA)	1-3	5.14	33	0	0	49.0	51	31	55
66	Michael Ynoa	R-R	6-7	210	9/24/91	**CHICAGO AL**	**1-0**	**3.00**	**23**	**0**	**0**	**30.0**	**20**	**17**	**30**
						Charlotte (AAA)	1-3	4.56	18	0	4	23.2	25	12	20
						Birmingham (AA)	0-0	0.00	3	0	0	4.0	0	0	4

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	Alfredo Gonzalez	R-R	6-1	230	7/13/92	Charlotte (AAA)	.000	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
						Birmingham (AA)	.296	39	135	13	40	0	8	10	22	2
						Corpus Christi (AA)	.158	44	146	14	23	0	7	14	40	0
38	Omar Narvaez	L-R	5-11	215	2/10/92	**CHICAGO AL**	**.267**	**34**	**101**	**13**	**27**	**1**	**10**	**14**	**14**	**0**
						Charlotte (AAA)	.245	41	143	14	35	2	11	9	17	0
						Birmingham (AA)	.222	13	45	4	10	0	5	4	8	0
61	Kevan Smith	R-R	6-4	230	6/28/88	Charlotte (AAA)	.219	49	183	18	40	8	24	16	36	0
						AZL White Sox (R)	.200	2	5	2	1	1	2	2	2	0
						CHICAGO AL	**.125**	**7**	**16**	**2**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**6**	**0**

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
79	Jose Abreu	R-R	6-3	255	1/29/87	**CHICAGO AL**	**.293**	**159**	**624**	**67**	**183**	**25**	**100**	**47**	**125**	**0**
12	Tim Anderson	R-R	6-1	185	6/23/93	**CHICAGO AL**	**.283**	**99**	**410**	**57**	**116**	**9**	**30**	**13**	**117**	**10**
						Charlotte (AAA)	.304	55	247	39	75	4	20	8	58	11
22	Matt Davidson	R-R	6-3	230	3/26/91	**CHICAGO AL**	**.500**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**1**	**0**
						Charlotte (AAA)	.268	75	284	35	76	10	46	32	86	0
21	Todd Frazier	R-R	6-3	220	2/12/86	**CHICAGO AL**	**.225**	**158**	**590**	**89**	**133**	**40**	**98**	**64**	**163**	**15**
27	Leury Garcia	S-R	5-8	170	3/18/91	**CHICAGO AL**	**.229**	**18**	**48**	**6**	**11**	**1**	**5**	**1**	**13**	**2**
						Charlotte (AAA)	.313	84	310	45	97	6	35	24	64	18
15	Brett Lawrie	R-R	6-0	210	1/18/90	**CHICAGO AL**	**.248**	**94**	**351**	**35**	**87**	**12**	**36**	**30**	**109**	**7**
						Birmingham (AA)	.313	5	16	2	5	0	0	0	3	0
	Yoan Moncada	S-R	6-2	205	5/27/95	**BOSTON**	**.211**	**8**	**19**	**3**	**4**	**0**	**1**	**1**	**12**	**0**
						Portland (AA)	.277	45	177	37	49	11	28	27	64	9
						Salem (A)	.307	61	228	57	70	4	34	45	60	36
18	Tyler Saladino	R-R	6-0	200	7/20/89	**CHICAGO AL**	**.282**	**93**	**298**	**33**	**84**	**8**	**38**	**13**	**62**	**11**
5	Carlos Sanchez	S-R	5-11	195	6/29/92	**CHICAGO AL**	**.208**	**53**	**154**	**15**	**32**	**4**	**21**	**5**	**42**	**0**
						Charlotte	.255	61	235	31	60	8	29	17	55	10

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
53	Melky Cabrera	S-L	5-10	210	8/11/84	**CHICAGO AL**	**.296**	**151**	**591**	**70**	**175**	**14**	**86**	**47**	**69**	**2**
36	Jason Coats	R-R	6-2	200	2/24/90	**CHICAGO AL**	**.200**	**28**	**50**	**8**	**10**	**1**	**4**	**5**	**12**	**1**
						Charlotte (AAA)	.330	78	297	44	98	10	38	25	69	1
	Adam Engel	R-R	6-2	210	12/9/91	Charlotte (AAA)	.242	41	149	19	36	3	16	10	50	8
						Birmingham (AA)	.255	74	306	56	78	4	25	39	70	31
						Winston-Salem (A)	.327	14	55	15	18	0	5	7	11	6
26	Avisail Garcia	R-R	6-4	240	6/12/91	**CHICAGO AL**	**.245**	**120**	**413**	**59**	**101**	**12**	**51**	**34**	**115**	**4**
						Charlotte (AAA)	.385	3	13	2	5	1	4	1	3	0
	Rymer Liriano	R-R	6-0	210	6/20/91	Injured — Missed Season										
	Jacob May	S-R	5-10	180	1/23/92	Charlotte (AAA)	.266	83	301	38	80	1	24	15	72	19
24	Charlie Tilson	L-L	5-11	195	12/2/92	**CHICAGO AL**	**.500**	**1**	**2**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
						Memphis (AAA)	.292	100	282	53	99	4	34	33	51	15

➤ FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

ZACK COLLINS, C

The White Sox have needed a catcher since A.J. Pierzynski's eight-year stay ended in 2012. They believe Collins is their guy, hopefully by 2018. He was the first catcher selected in the 2016 draft, taken at No. 10. Drafted in the 27th round by the Reds as a high school player in 2013, Collins signed with Miami and starred for the Hurricanes for three seasons. He started his career as the ACC Freshman of the Year and ended it by winning the Johnny Bench Award. His 78 walks in his junior season, tops in college baseball, were as impressive as his .363 average and 16 home runs. Collins hit .258 in High-A before playing part-time in the Arizona Fall League. Expect him at AA Birmingham this summer. He'll get every chance to catch, although critics say he'll end up at first base or designated hitter.

➤ TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Yoan Moncada, 2B (21) Rated the top overall prospect in baseball by some, Moncada has been compared to Robinson Cano; he had 52 extra-base hits and 45 stolen bases last season in High-A and Double-A.

2. Reynaldo Lopez, RHP (23) Lopez started in six of his 11 games for the Nationals but must improve his control as the Sox decide if he fits better in the pen.

3. Lucas Giolito, RHP (22) Tall, powerful righty struggled for the first time as a pro while walking more (12) than he struck out (11) in 21.1 innings with the Nationals.

4. Michael Kopech, RHP (20) Flashing a 100-mph fastball, he struck out 26 in 22.1 innings while going 3–0 in the Arizona Fall League.

5. Zack Collins, C (22) The first catcher the Sox have drafted in the first round in 22 years, Collins needs more work on framing and throwing than his bat.

6. Carson Fulmer, RHP (23) Fulmer worked 11.2 innings in more than a month in the big-league bullpen before finishing with four Class AAA starts.

7. Zack Burdi, RHP (22) The best relief pitcher in college last spring, Burdi earned three promotions, striking out 22 in 16 innings at Class AAA with his 101 mph fastball.

8. Spencer Adams, RHP (20) Adams pounds the strike zone, walking only 31 in 163 innings in two minor-league stops in 2016.

9. Charlie Tilson, OF (24) Tilson achieved his childhood dream of playing for his hometown Sox but tore his hamstring in his only big-league game.

10. Alec Hansen, RHP (22) Hansen slid into the second round in 2016 but has delivered 81 strikeouts in 54.2 pro innings.

CLEVELAND INDIANS

The Indians enter the 2017 season in the best position to play deep into October on an annual basis since they dominated the AL Central from 1995 through 2001. While their run to Game 7 of the World Series last season may have been unexpected, it was not a shock.

They will open this season with a healthy rotation — they were down to two-and-a-half starters through much of the postseason last year — with the return of Carlos Carrasco and Danny Salazar. Andrew Miller, Dan Otero, Bryan Shaw and Cody Allen, the core of their bullpen, are back. So is the man, manager Terry Francona, who turned postseason baseball upside down with his handling of that bullpen.

Just before Christmas, they filled a big hole in the middle of their lineup by signing free-agent slugger Edwin Encarnacion to a three-year, $65 million contract. Last year, the Indians found out the value of a big right-handed bat in the middle of their lineup when Mike Napoli reached career highs with 34 homers and 101 RBIs. Encarnacion is Napoli squared, which should bode well for an offense that finished second in the American League in runs, especially if Michael Brantley is able to rebound from two surgeries on his right shoulder that limited him to 11 games last year.

The lineup boasts intriguing young players in Francisco Lindor, Jose Ramirez and Tyler Naquin, who are tied to a solid core featuring Jason Kipnis, Carlos Santana, Lonnie Chisenhall and catcher Yan Gomes, who has had problems staying healthy the last two years.

The Indians' timing couldn't be better. While they will try to extend their streak of winning seasons to five straight, the rest of the AL Central is rebuilding or considering rebuilding. If they can stay healthy, they are well positioned to stay on top of the division for the foreseeable future.

ROTATION Corey Kluber, Carrasco, Salazar, Josh Tomlin and Trevor Bauer will enter the season as one of the top rotations in the big leagues. Carrasco (broken right finger) and Salazar (right forearm) were injured last September and except for two relief appearances by Salazar did not contribute in the postseason. They are expected to be 100 percent in spring training. Kluber, third in the Cy Young voting last year after winning it in 2014, has established himself as one of the top starters in the game. After winning 18 games in the regular season, he went 4–1 in six starts in the postseason. Ryan Merritt and Mike Clevinger will provide depth in the bullpen or start the season in the minors.

BULLPEN The signing of Encarnacion wasn't the only indication that owner Paul Dolan, always careful with a buck, was committed to this edition of the Indians. In July they acquired Miller for four prospects and what remained on his contract with the Yankees — an estimated $22 million. Miller, signed through 2018, proved to be the finishing touch to an already formidable pen and an agent of change for the sport. While Miller had the best arm in the pen, Francona didn't save him for the ninth inning. He was not afraid to use him with the game in the balance in the sixth, seventh or eighth inning. Industrial-strength relievers Shaw and Allen had Miller's back when Francona went to him early.

MIDDLE INFIELD Lindor and Kipnis are a good two-way combination in the middle of the diamond. Lindor, 23, won his first Gold Glove last year at shortstop and is the emerging face of the franchise. He's a switch-hitter with speed and decent power. Kipnis, 30, isn't as flashy defensively as Lindor, but he's coming off his most consistent season at second base and is a steadying force in the clubhouse. Kipnis, like Lindor, supplies speed and power to the top of the order.

CORNERS Encarnacion and Santana are expected to share first base. Last year they spent most of their time at DH, but Encarnacion played 75 games at first with Toronto. Encarnacion is averaging 39 homers and 110 RBIs over the last five years. The switch-hitting Santana is coming off a season in which he hit a career-high 34 homers, while batting mostly leadoff or fifth. The versatile Ramirez moved from left field to third base at the end of July and made it his own. Ramirez, a switch-hitter, has extra-base power and speed. Last year he hit .355 (50-for-141) with runners in scoring position.

OUTFIELD Last season, Francona had success using platoons at all three outfield spots. A healthy Brantley could change that in left field, but Francona is expected to stick with platoons in center and right field. Naquin and Abraham Almonte could platoon in center, while Chisenhall and Brandon Guyer platoon in right. Naquin finished third in the Rookie of the Year balloting last year, while the switch-hitting Almonte missed the first 80 games of the season with a PED suspension. Guyer proved to be a valuable right-handed hitter after being acquired from Tampa Bay at the Aug. 1 trade deadline. The Indians have young outfielders Greg Allen and Bradley Zimmer in the pipeline.

2017 PREDICTION
1st
AL Central

2016 RECORD
94-67

HOME: 53-28 **ROAD:** 41-39

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

TEAM INFO

PROGRESSIVE FIELD
Opened: 1994 **Capacity:** 43,429
Left: 325' **Center:** 400' **Right:** 325'
Tickets: 866-48-TRIBE
cleveland.indians.mlb.com

➤ FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
1B Edwin Encarnacion

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
RHP Corey Kluber

BULL MARKET
3B Jose Ramirez

BEAR MARKET
C Yan Gomes

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
OF Michael Brantley

IPO OF Yandy Diaz

FUTURES MARKET 1B Bobby Bradley

INSIDER TIP Don't make the mistake of regarding former utilityman Ramirez as a one-hit wonder, and don't forget how dominant RHPs Carlos Carrasco and Danny Salazar can be when they're healthy.

➤ STATLINE

OPPONENTS' OPS VS. CURVEBALLS: 2016

1. Corey Kluber, Indians	**.419**
2. Justin Verlander, Tigers	.467
3. Madison Bumgarner, Giants	.491
4. Rick Porcello, Red Sox	.514
5. Trevor Bauer, Indians	**.564**

(min. 500 batters faced)

Tom DiPace

COREY KLUBER

➤ PROJECTED LINEUP

NEXT LEVEL

LINEUP

2B	Jason Kipnis (L)
SS	Francisco Lindor (S)
LF	Michael Brantley (L)
DH	Edwin Encarnacion (R)
1B	**Carlos Santana (S)**
3B	Jose Ramirez (S)
RF	Lonnie Chisenhall (L)
C	Yan Gomes (R)
CF	Tyler Naquin (L)

Carlos Santana swung at just 19.8 percent of pitches outside of the strike zone, which was best in the American League. That helped contribute to his lowest career strikeout rate (14.4 percent).

BENCH

OF	Brandon Guyer (R)
OF	Abraham Almonte (S)
C	**Roberto Perez (R)**
UT	Michael Martinez (S)

Roberto Perez struggled through injuries but hit .256 in his last 30 games after hitting .107 in his first 31.

ROTATION

RHP	Corey Kluber
RHP	Carlos Carrasco
RHP	Danny Salazar
RHP	**Josh Tomlin**
RHP	Trevor Bauer

Josh Tomlin had the lowest walk rate in baseball at 2.8 percent. He did not issue a walk in 14 of 29 starts. But his strikeout rate fell from 22.7 percent to 16.3 percent.

BULLPEN

RHP	Cody Allen (Closer)
RHP	Bryan Shaw
LHP	**Andrew Miller**
RHP	Dan Otero
RHP	Zach McAllister
LHP	Kyle Crockett
RHP	Mike Clevinger

Andrew Miller had a strand rate of 95.7 percent, which is the second-highest rate among relievers since 1987, surpassed only by Huston Street's 99.5 percent strand rate in 2013.

➤ SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE INDIANS

"I don't know if they'll win the World Series, but they've gotten there, so they know they can do it — and that makes them even more dangerous. I worry a little about the extra mileage on the arms for guys like Corey Kluber and Josh Tomlin, but getting Carlos Carrasco and Danny Salazar back compensates for that. Francisco Lindor's an MVP-in-waiting, and at that age he'll only get better. I don't think they can count on Michael Brantley, unfortunately; that shoulder could still be a big, big problem. Yan Gomes, with the injuries and underperformance, isn't a safe bet as the starting catcher, either. But as long as he can catch and throw, which he can, the rest of the lineup can carry him. The bullpen will continue to be a real strength, but they were taxed so much in the postseason that you wonder how that'll play out."

➤ STATISTICIAN

53–28	The Indians' home record last season, tying Texas for the best in the AL.
31	Number of times Brandon Guyer was hit by pitches last season to lead the big leagues.
123	Batters Andrew Miller struck out last season in 74.1 innings for the Indians and Yankees.
30	Batters Miller struck out last postseason in 19.1 innings.
0	Runs closer Cody Allen allowed last postseason, while striking out 24 in 13.2 innings.
589	Combined appearances Cody Allen and Bryan Shaw have made over the last four seasons.
14–2	Corey Kluber's record over his last 21 starts of the regular season and postseason.
2	Times Terry Francona has been named AL Manager of the Year by the BBWAA in the last four years.

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3 TEX	4 TEX	5 TEX	6	7 ARI	8 ARI
9 ARI	10	11 CWS	12 CWS	13 CWS	14 DET	15 DET
16 DET	17 MIN	18 MIN	19 MIN	20 MIN	21 CWS	22 CWS
23 CWS	24	25 HOU	26 HOU	27 HOU	28 SEA	29 SEA
30 SEA						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 DET	2 DET	3 DET	4 DET	5 KC	6 KC
7 KC	8 TOR	9 TOR	10 TOR	11	12 MIN	13 MIN
14 MIN	15 TB	16 TB	17 TB	18	19 HOU	20 HOU
21 HOU	22 CIN	23 CIN	24 CIN	25 CIN	26 KC	27 KC
28 KC	29 OAK	30 OAK	31 OAK			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 OAK	2 KC	3 KC
4 KC	5	6 COL	7 COL	8	9 CWS	10 CWS
11 CWS	12	13 LAD	14 LAD	15 LAD	16 MIN	17 MIN
18 MIN	19 BAL	20 BAL	21 BAL	22 BAL	23 MIN	24 MIN
25 MIN	26 TEX	27 TEX	28 TEX	29 TEX	30 DET	

July

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 DET
2 DET	3	4 SD	5 SD	6 SD	7 DET	8 DET
9 DET	10	11	12	13	14 OAK	15 OAK
16 OAK	17 SF	18 SF	19 SF	20	21 TOR	22 TOR
23 TOR	24	25 LAA	26 LAA	27 LAA	28 CWS	29 CWS
30 CWS	31 BOS					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 BOS	2 BOS	3 NYY	4 NYY	5 NYY
6 NYY	7	8 COL	9 COL	10 TB	11 TB	12 TB
13 TB	14	15 MIN	16 MIN	17 MIN	18 KC	19 KC
20 KC	21 BOS	22 BOS	23 BOS	24 BOS	25 KC	26 KC
27 KC	28 NYY	29 NYY	30 NYY	31		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 DET	2 DET
3 DET	4 CWS	5 CWS	6 CWS	7 CWS	8 BAL	9 BAL
10 BAL	11 DET	12 DET	13 DET	14 KC	15 KC	16 KC
17 KC	18	19 LAA	20 LAA	21 LAA	22 SEA	23 SEA
24 SEA	25	26 MIN	27 MIN	28 MIN	29 CWS	30 CWS
1 CWS						

FRANCISCO LINDOR

CATCHING When Gomes and Roberto Perez are healthy, the Indians' catching situation is in good hands, but both missed significant time last year. Gomes played 74 games because of a separated right shoulder and broken right hand, while Perez played only 61 games because of a broken right thumb. Perez did a great job handling the pitching staff in the postseason, and it will be interesting to see who emerges as the starter.

DH/BENCH The DH spot is secure with Encarnacion and Santana. The platoon situations will dictate who the extra outfielders are, but Guyer and Almonte are expected to come off the bench on most days. The competition for the utility spot between Michael Martinez and Erik Gonzalez should be entertaining. Yandy Diaz, who has done nothing but hit for the last two years in the minors, could get a look as well.

MANAGEMENT If Francona wasn't considered one of the best managers in baseball before, he is now. He's led the Indians to four straight winning seasons and two postseason appearances on a tight budget. Last year he hit all the right notes, using Miller to perfection, squeezing every ounce of production out of the platoon advantage in the outfield and managing a starting rotation of two-and-a-half starters to Game 7 of the World Series before falling to the Cubs. Chris Antonetti, Indians president of baseball operations, has done a great job of giving Francona a versatile and talented stream of players to work with.

FINAL ANALYSIS The only thing missing from the Indians' quest for success is fan support. For the last two years, the organization has remodeled Progressive Field, removing seats, changing concourses and making it more consumer friendly. On the field, they've produced four straight winning seasons. But the Indians, who once had a streak of 455 straight sellouts, have continually finished near the bottom of MLB attendance. Will that change following their inspired run to Game 7 of the World Series last year?

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

DRONE ATTACK A few days before Trevor Bauer was scheduled to start Game 2 of the ALCS against Toronto, he was working on one of his drones. One of the propellers unexpectedly hit high gear, severely cutting the little finger on his right (pitching) hand. Bauer, who needed 10 stitches to close the cut, missed his Game 2 start and lasted just two-thirds of an inning in Game 3 before the fingers started bleeding and he had to leave the game.

DO YOU DELIVER? Mike Napoli hit 22 of his 34 homers last season at Progressive Field. After circling the bases, Napoli was frequently shown on television picking up the dugout phone. No, he wasn't ordering a double cheese and pepperoni pizza to celebrate. It just looked that way. Napoli had a running joke with one of the guys in the Indians' video room and called him when he homered at home.

LATE-NIGHT CRAVINGS Manager Terry Francona, after the Indians took a 3–1 lead in the World Series against the Cubs in Chicago, was hit with late-night hunger pangs. He called room service about 3:30 a.m. at the team hotel, but they said it would take about an hour-and-a-half to deliver his order. Instead, he ordered $44 worth of ice cream, which was delivered much faster. "I had a brownie sundae," says Francona. "I had two orders of chocolate ice cream. I had two orders of vanilla ice cream with chocolate sauce. Then to kind of keep it healthy, I had berries. Oh, yeah, and I had a Diet Coke."

TRADE THAT WASN'T The Indians acquired Andrew Miller from the Yankees on July 31. At the same time, they were trying to work out a deal for Milwaukee catcher Jonathan Lucroy. The teams agreed on the deal, but Lucroy, who had the Indians on his no-trade list, vetoed the trade. The Indians were ready to part with prospects Francisco Mejia, Greg Allen, Yu-Cheng Chang and Shawn Armstrong. Sometimes the best trades are the ones you don't make. Mejia, Allen and Chang will enter the 2017 season among the Indians' top-10 prospects, while Armstrong has a chance to make the big-league bullpen.

LONG AND SHORT OF IT The Indians set a franchise record by winning 14 straight games from June 17 through July 1. The streak propelled them from a half-game lead in the AL Central to a seven-game lead. Meanwhile, the Indians' longest losing streak of the season was only three games. Every other team in the big leagues had a losing streak of four or more games.

Tom DiPace

INDIANS ROSTER

General Manager: Mike Chernoff **Manager:** Terry Francona **Coaches** Sandy Alomar Jr. (first base), Jason Bere (bullpen), Ty Van Burkleo (hitting), Mickey Callaway (pitching), Brad Mills (bench), Matt Quatraro (asst. hitting), Mike Sarbaugh (third base)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
49	Austin Adams	R-R	5-11	200	8/19/86	**CLEVELAND**	**0-0**	**9.82**	**19**	**0**	**0**	**18.1**	**27**	**7**	**17**
						Columbus (AAA)	2-4	4.54	34	0	8	37.2	44	9	41
37	Cody Allen	R-R	6-1	210	11/20/88	**CLEVELAND**	**3-5**	**2.51**	**67**	**0**	**32**	**68.0**	**41**	**27**	**87**
56	Cody Anderson	R-R	6-4	240	9/14/90	**CLEVELAND**	**2-5**	**6.68**	**19**	**9**	**0**	**60.2**	**85**	**13**	**54**
						Columbus (AAA)	0-2	3.62	13	6	1	32.1	32	10	40
51	Shawn Armstrong	R-R	6-2	225	9/11/90	**CLEVELAND**	**0-0**	**2.53**	**10**	**0**	**0**	**10.2**	**9**	**5**	**7**
						Columbus (AAA)	3-1	1.84	47	0	9	49.0	27	29	72
71	Dylan Baker	R-R	6-2	205	4/6/92	Injured — Missed Season									
47	Trevor Bauer	R-R	6-1	200	1/17/91	**CLEVELAND**	**12-8**	**4.26**	**35**	**28**	**0**	**190.0**	**179**	**70**	**168**
59	Carlos Carrasco	R-R	6-4	210	3/21/87	**CLEVELAND**	**11-8**	**3.32**	**25**	**25**	**0**	**146.1**	**134**	**34**	**150**
73	Mike Clevinger	R-R	6-4	210	12/21/90	**CLEVELAND**	**3-3**	**5.26**	**17**	**10**	**0**	**53.0**	**50**	**29**	**50**
						Columbus (AAA)	11-1	3.00	17	17	0	93.0	78	35	97
65	Joseph Colon	R-R	6-0	180	2/18/90	**CLEVELAND**	**1-3**	**7.20**	**11**	**0**	**0**	**10.0**	**12**	**7**	**10**
						Columbus (AAA)	0-1	0.82	20	0	0	22.0	8	12	21
	Tim Cooney	L-L	6-3	195	12/19/90	Injured — Missed Season									
57	Kyle Crockett	L-L	6-2	175	12/15/91	**CLEVELAND**	**0-0**	**5.06**	**29**	**0**	**0**	**16.0**	**16**	**7**	**17**
						Columbus (AAA)	1-1	3.90	29	0	0	30.0	29	11	26
	Edwin Escobar	L-L	6-2	225	4/22/92	**ARIZONA**	**1-2**	**7.23**	**25**	**2**	**0**	**23.2**	**33**	**12**	**17**
						Reno (AAA)	6-3	4.25	16	16	0	91.0	99	36	63
						Pawtucket (AAA)	0-0	0.00	3	1	0	7.0	6	1	2
66	Perci Garner	R-R	6-3	225	12/13/88	**CLEVELAND**	**0-0**	**4.82**	**8**	**0**	**0**	**9.1**	**12**	**5**	**12**
						Columbus (AAA)	2-0	1.63	18	0	5	27.2	15	11	23
						Akron (AA)	5-1	1.94	23	0	2	51.0	37	11	47
	Nick Goody	R-R	5-11	195	7/6/91	**NEW YORK AL**	**0-0**	**4.66**	**27**	**0**	**0**	**29.0**	**30**	**12**	**34**
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	0-1	1.93	18	0	5	23.1	12	4	35
28	Corey Kluber	R-R	6-4	215	4/10/86	**CLEVELAND**	**18-9**	**3.14**	**32**	**32**	**0**	**215.0**	**170**	**57**	**227**
34	Zach McAllister	R-R	6-6	240	12/8/87	**CLEVELAND**	**3-2**	**3.44**	**53**	**2**	**0**	**52.1**	**53**	**23**	**54**
						Columbus (AAA)	0-0	4.50	2	0	0	2.0	3	0	1
						Akron (AA)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	2.0	1	0	2
69	Ryan Merritt	L-L	6-0	180	2/21/92	**CLEVELAND**	**1-0**	**1.64**	**4**	**1**	**0**	**11.0**	**6**	**0**	**6**
						Columbus (AAA)	11-8	3.70	24	24	0	143.1	156	23	92
24	Andrew Miller	L-L	6-7	205	5/21/85	**CLEVELAND**	**4-0**	**1.55**	**26**	**0**	**3**	**29.0**	**14**	**2**	**46**
						NEW YORK AL	**6-1**	**1.39**	**44**	**0**	**9**	**45.1**	**28**	**7**	**77**
	Hoby Milner	L-L	6-2	165	1/13/91	Lehigh Valley (AAA)	0-1	4.50	11	0	1	16.0	16	3	22
						Reading (AA)	5-3	1.84	38	0	5	49.0	41	12	54
74	Shawn Morimando	L-L	6-0	200	11/20/92	**CLEVELAND**	**0-0**	**11.57**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**4.2**	**9**	**5**	**5**
						Columbus (AAA)	5-2	3.51	11	11	0	59.0	64	21	46
						Akron (AA)	10-3	3.09	16	16	0	93.1	77	36	73
61	Dan Otero	R-R	6-3	205	2/19/85	**CLEVELAND**	**5-1**	**1.53**	**62**	**0**	**1**	**70.2**	**54**	**10**	**57**
62	Adam Plutko	R-R	6-3	200	10/3/91	**CLEVELAND**	**0-0**	**7.36**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**3.2**	**5**	**2**	**3**
						Columbus (AAA)	6-5	4.10	15	15	0	90.0	87	34	67
						Akron (AA)	3-3	3.27	13	13	0	71.2	64	12	63
31	Danny Salazar	R-R	6-0	195	1/11/90	**CLEVELAND**	**11-6**	**3.87**	**25**	**25**	**0**	**137.1**	**121**	**63**	**161**
27	Bryan Shaw	S-R	6-1	220	11/8/87	**CLEVELAND**	**2-5**	**3.24**	**75**	**0**	**1**	**66.2**	**56**	**28**	**69**
43	Josh Tomlin	R-R	6-1	190	10/19/84	**CLEVELAND**	**13-9**	**4.40**	**30**	**29**	**0**	**174.0**	**187**	**20**	**118**

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
10	Yan Gomes	R-R	6-2	215	7/19/87	**CLEVELAND**	**.167**	**74**	**251**	**22**	**42**	**9**	**34**	**9**	**69**	**0**
						Akron (AA)	.444	3	9	3	4	0	2	1	2	0
	Francisco Mejia	S-R	5-10	175	10/27/95	Lynchburg (A)	.333	42	168	22	56	4	29	13	24	1
						Lake County (A)	.347	60	239	41	83	7	51	15	39	1
55	Roberto Perez	R-R	5-11	220	12/23/88	**CLEVELAND**	**.183**	**61**	**153**	**14**	**28**	**3**	**17**	**23**	**44**	**0**
						Columbus (AAA)	.400	2	5	1	2	0	0	2	1	0
						Lake County (A)	.000	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
						AZL Indians (R)	.333	6	9	4	3	0	3	5	1	0

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
36	Jesus Aguilar	R-R	6-3	250	6/30/90	**CLEVELAND**	**.000**	**9**	**6**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**
						Columbus (AAA)	.247	137	515	62	127	30	92	53	110	0
	Edwin Encarnacion	R-R	6-1	230	1/7/83	**TORONTO**	**.263**	**160**	**601**	**99**	**158**	**42**	**127**	**87**	**138**	**2**
78	Erik Gonzalez	R-R	6-3	195	8/31/91	**CLEVELAND**	**.313**	**21**	**16**	**2**	**5**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**8**	**0**
						Columbus (AAA)	.296	104	429	62	127	11	53	19	88	12
22	Jason Kipnis	L-R	5-11	195	4/3/87	**CLEVELAND**	**.275**	**156**	**610**	**91**	**168**	**23**	**82**	**60**	**146**	**15**
12	Francisco Lindor	S-R	5-11	190	11/14/93	**CLEVELAND**	**.301**	**158**	**604**	**99**	**182**	**15**	**78**	**57**	**88**	**19**
1	Michael Martinez	S-R	5-9	180	9/16/82	**CLEVELAND**	**.242**	**59**	**95**	**15**	**23**	**1**	**4**	**3**	**21**	**0**
						Columbus (AAA)	.288	27	104	12	30	2	12	9	21	2
						BOSTON	**.167**	**4**	**6**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**2**	**0**
11	Jose Ramirez	S-R	5-9	180	9/17/92	**CLEVELAND**	**.312**	**152**	**565**	**84**	**176**	**11**	**76**	**44**	**62**	**22**
39	Giovanny Urshela	R-R	6-0	215	10/11/91	Columbus (AAA)	.274	117	468	54	128	8	57	15	58	0
41	Carlos Santana	S-R	5-11	210	4/8/86	**CLEVELAND**	**.259**	**158**	**582**	**89**	**151**	**34**	**87**	**99**	**99**	**5**

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
35	Abraham Almonte	S-R	5-9	210	6/27/89	**CLEVELAND**	**.264**	**67**	**182**	**24**	**48**	**1**	**22**	**8**	**42**	**8**
						Columbus (AAA)	.444	7	27	6	12	1	4	5	4	2
23	Michael Brantley	L-L	6-2	200	5/15/87	**CLEVELAND**	**.231**	**11**	**39**	**5**	**9**	**0**	**7**	**3**	**6**	**1**
						Columbus (AAA)	.111	3	9	2	1	0	1	1	1	0
						Akron (AA)	.211	6	19	1	4	0	1	2	1	0
						Lake County (A)	.667	1	3	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
						Mahoning Valley (A)	.500	1	2	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
8	Lonnie Chisenhall	L-R	6-2	190	10/4/88	**CLEVELAND**	**.286**	**126**	**385**	**43**	**110**	**8**	**57**	**23**	**70**	**6**
						Columbus (AAA)	.000	3	8	0	0	0	2	2	3	0
						Akron (AA)	.133	4	15	3	2	0	2	2	2	0
6	Brandon Guyer	R-R	6-2	200	1/28/86	**CLEVELAND**	**.333**	**38**	**81**	**12**	**27**	**2**	**14**	**7**	**13**	**1**
						TAMPA BAY	**.241**	**63**	**212**	**27**	**51**	**7**	**18**	**12**	**42**	**2**
						Charlotte (A)	.167	3	12	2	2	0	1	0	2	0
72	Tyler Naquin	L-R	6-2	195	4/24/91	**CLEVELAND**	**.296**	**116**	**321**	**52**	**95**	**14**	**43**	**36**	**112**	**6**
						Columbus (AAA)	.286	17	70	6	20	1	8	8	15	1

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

WILL BENSON, OF

When the Indians selected Benson with their No. 1 pick in the 2016 draft, it marked the fourth time in six years that they took a high school player with their top pick. They selected the 6'5", 225-pound Benson out of The Westminister Schools in Atlanta with the 14th overall pick, signed him for $2.5 million and sent him to the Arizona Rookie League Indians. The left-handed hitter batted .209 (33-for-158) with 19 extra-base hits, including six homers, 22 walks, 60 strikeouts and a .745 OPS. He played in 44 games, including 39 starts in right field. Benson, who improved as the season went along, showed the ability to make adjustments. The Tribe's minor-league evaluators were impressed, because Benson showed them the skills and makeup that their scouts talked about. He is at least four to five years away from the big leagues.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Francisco Mejia, C (21) The switch-hitter had a 50-game hitting streak last year. He makes hard contact and could start 2017 at Class AA.

2. Bradley Zimmer, OF (24) He didn't do much at Triple-A last year but showed power and speed in Arizona Fall League. Could make the big leagues this year.

3. Yandy Diaz, OF (25) The Cuban defector is coming off an impressive offensive showing in winter ball after a solid season at Class AA Akron and Class AAA Columbus.

4. Brady Aiken, LHP (20) Former overall No. 1 pick in 2014 draft by Houston has bounced back from Tommy John surgery. Struck out 57 in 46.1 innings in low minors.

5. Bobby Bradley, 1B (20) Big-time power and big-time strikeouts for the 6'1", 225-pound left-handed hitter. Hit 29 homers and fanned 170 times at Class A last year.

6. Erik Gonzalez, INF/OF (25) He's developing offensively and can play all over the diamond. Gonzalez could be a trade chip because his best spot is shortstop.

7. Greg Allen, OF (23) Allen hit .295 (145-for-491) with 119 runs, 77 walks and 45 steals at Class A and AA last year.

8. Triston McKenzie, RHP (19) Beanpole righthander who struck out 104 batters and walked 22 last year in 83.1 innings for two Class A teams.

9. Yu-Cheng Chang, SS (21) He turned in a good year last season at High-A Lynchburg and followed it with a good showing in the AFL. He should be promoted to Class AA.

10. Juan Hillman, LHP (19) He made 15 starts at Class A Mahoning Valley, striking out 47 and walking 24 in 63 innings.

DETROIT TIGERS

When a team with an aging roster and a bloated, luxury-taxed payroll in excess of $200 million fails to make the playoffs, as the Tigers did in 2016, a change in philosophy is warranted. Thus, when GM Al Avila vowed at the start of the offseason to do something different — then quickly traded away outfielder Cameron Maybin, and his $9 million contract option — it surprised exactly no one. Judging from all the trade speculation surrounding the Tigers — with everyone from superstars Miguel Cabrera and Justin Verlander to valued run-producers Ian Kinsler and J.D. Martinez said to be available — many expected the tear-down to continue. But as the offseason wore on, and as some division rivals went all-in on shedding payroll and hoarding prospects, the Tigers stayed relatively quiet, hanging on to their vets and giving the impression of a team looking to take one last shot with its core. The Tigers in 2017 could occupy that middle ground of hoping somehow to get into contention but prepared to sell off pieces at the trade deadline if it doesn't happen.

ROTATION On paper at least, the Tigers' rotation looks like a powerhouse around which to build a contender. Verlander was the 2016 AL Cy Young runner-up. Michael Fulmer was the Rookie of the Year. Jordan Zimmermann is a two-time All-Star with 67 wins the past five years. And young lefties Daniel Norris and Matt Boyd took steps forward in 2016. But the rotation is not without its concerns, particularly the health of Zimmermann and the issue of the $24.8 million owed in 2017 to Mike Pelfrey and Anibal Sanchez, a pair of veterans showing signs of deep decline. The fact that Boyd has minor-league options remaining could doom him to Triple-A to start the year, if, say, Sanchez shows signs of a renaissance. At its best, this could be one of the top rotations in the AL. The question is whether — or for how long — it will be at its best.

BULLPEN Despite all the talk of trading veterans, the team quietly exercised closer Francisco Rodriguez's $6 million option for 2017, intending to keep the veteran righthander on board for another year. In 2016, Rodriguez finally plugged the massive black hole at the back end of the Tigers' bullpen. While this bullpen ranked just 24th in the majors in ERA, the back end was fairly dependable, with Rodriguez anchoring a late-inning relay of righthanders Shane Greene and Bruce Rondon and lefty Justin Wilson. Wilson, though, was a subject of rampant trade rumors throughout December, and the Tigers took a lefty, Daniel Stumpf of the Royals, in the Rule 5 Draft as an apparent hedge. Like many teams, the Tigers have work to do in the middle innings.

MIDDLE INFIELD Kinsler and Jose Iglesias were thought to be two of the Tigers' most appealing trade pieces this winter — a 34-year-old second baseman coming off his best offensive season in five years, and his first Gold Glove to boot, and a 27-year-old shortstop who was an All-Star as recently as 2015. But as of late December, and despite rampant trade speculation, they were both still in Detroit. Kinsler's advancing age and Iglesias' offensive regression in 2016 (his first season playing in more than 130 games) would be concerns for any team, but both are relatively affordable and — at least in Kinsler's case — plenty productive. It would be understandable if the Tigers felt they needed to be blown away to trade either.

CORNERS The 2016 season brought the breakout season the Tigers have long envisioned for third baseman Nick Castellanos. At age 24, he produced a .285/.331/.496 slash line and established himself as a middle-of-the-order hitter in the Tigers' stacked lineup — at least until getting hit on the left hand by a pitch in August and missing an entire month. Though he is never going to win a Gold Glove, he is among the least of the Tigers' worries for 2017. As for Cabrera, the Tigers may have trumpeted his availability via trade, but they also knew that his age (34 in April) and massive contract (seven years and $220 million remaining) made him essentially untradeable. Barring that, the Tigers would gladly sign up for another year of 38 homers, 108 RBIs, a .956 OPS and especially 158 games played.

OUTFIELD This is where Tigers fans envisioned massive change, with Martinez (heading into his walk year) presumed to be one of the team's most appealing trade targets, and center field in perpetual flux. But by late December, Martinez was still around, and center field, following the trade of Maybin, appeared to be a battle between Anthony Gose and prospect JaCoby Jones. And then there's Justin Upton. The Tigers' left fielder, who signed a six-year $132.75 million deal prior to 2016, was a disaster for most of the season before exploding for 18 homers in his final 37 games. It is not much of a stretch to say the Tigers' 2017 fortunes could be tied to which Upton shows up this year.

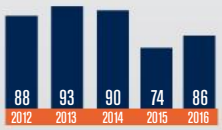
CATCHING James McCann is a capable No. 1, with an excellent throwing arm behind the plate (a 45 percent caught-stealing percent-

2017 PREDICTION
2nd
AL Central

2016 RECORD
86-75

HOME: 45-35 **ROAD:** 41-40

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND



TEAM INFO

COMERICA PARK
Opened: 2000 **Capacity:** 41,255
Left: 345' **Center:** 420' **Right:** 330'
Tickets: 313-471-2255
detroit.tigers.mlb.com

FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
1B Miguel Cabrera

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
RHP Justin Verlander

BULL MARKET
LHP Daniel Norris

BEAR MARKET
DH Victor Martinez

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
SP Jordan Zimmermann

IPO OF JaCoby Jones

FUTURES MARKET OF Christin Stewart

INSIDER TIP Cabrera hasn't put all the monster triple crown-category numbers together since 2013. This year, he will. Don't hesitate to pounce in the first five picks of your draft.

STATLINE

OPPOSITE-FIELD HRs: LAST 10 YEARS

1. Miguel Cabrera	**73**
2. Adrian Gonzalez	57
3. Ryan Howard	54
4. Joey Votto	49
5. Ryan Braun	46

Source: Baseball-Reference.com

Norris: AP Images; Cabrera: Tom DiPace

PROJECTED LINEUP

NEXT LEVEL

LINEUP

2B	Ian Kinsler (R)
LF	Justin Upton (R)
1B	Miguel Cabrera (R)
DH	Victor Martinez (S)
RF	J.D. Martinez (R)
3B	Nick Castellanos (R)
C	James McCann (R)
SS	**Jose Iglesias (R)**
CF	JaCoby Jones (R)

Jose Iglesias led baseball with a career-high 91.1 percent contact rate but didn't do much when he made contact. His 18.3 percent hard contact rate was four points lower than any other qualified hitter, giving him a .255 batting average.

BENCH

UT	**Andrew Romine (S)**
OF	Tyler Collins (L)
C	John Hicks (R)
INF	Omar Infante (R)

Andrew Romine swung at 55.5 percent of pitches he saw, which would have been the sixth-highest rate in MLB had he qualified.

ROTATION

RHP	**Justin Verlander**
RHP	Jordan Zimmermann
RHP	Michael Fulmer
LHP	Daniel Norris
RHP	Anibal Sanchez

Justin Verlander led the AL with a career-high 28.1 percent strikeout rate. He has increased his strikeout rate the last two seasons from 17.8 percent to 21.1 percent to 28.1 percent.

BULLPEN

RHP	Francisco Rodriguez (Closer)
RHP	**Bruce Rondon**
LHP	Kyle Ryan
RHP	Mark Lowe
RHP	Alex Wilson
RHP	Shane Greene
LHP	Daniel Stumpf

Bruce Rondon cut his ERA from 5.81 in 2015 to 2.97 in 2016 thanks largely to cutting his walk rate from 13.1 percent to 8.3 percent.

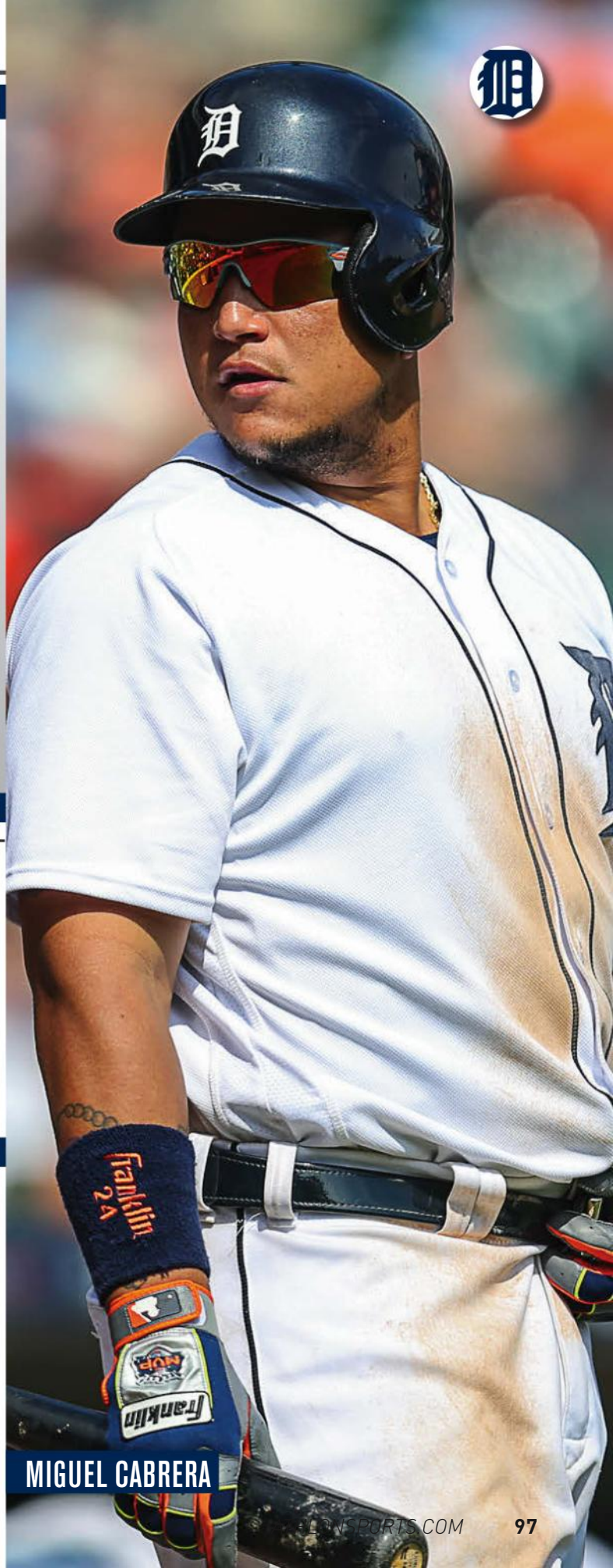
SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE TIGERS

"They're a dangerous team, but their age makes them fragile. The offense will always keep them in games, because they've got impact bats up and down the lineup. Justin Verlander's always had the stuff, and he's showing now how smart he is on the mound; if he doesn't have power that day, he can pitch backwards with his curveball and changeup. He's evolved to the point where he can adapt not just from start to start, but at-bat to at-bat — and he's a leader on that staff. Look at Michael Fulmer: His changeup's a separator, and his fastball and slider are plus pitches, too. He's a budding No. 1 for me. The problem is they really need Jordan Zimmermann to be the guy he was early in the season, and I don't know if he can. They're in a tough spot; definitely a contender with the Twins and White Sox down, but aging and not especially deep."

STATISTICIAN

93.5	Average fastball velocity for Justin Verlander in 2016, seventh best among AL starters and Verlander's best since 2012.
446	Career home runs for Miguel Cabrera, second to Albert Pujols among active players. He is also the youngest of any hitter in the top 10.
44	Wild pitches by Tigers pitchers in 2016, fewest in the AL, and another sign of James McCann's defensive prowess behind the plate.
.987	Tigers' fielding percentage in 2016, a club record. They may not have superb range, but they make the plays they are supposed to make.
8	Players who saw playing time in center field for the Tigers in 2016, including four who started at least 10 games.
4-14	Tigers' record against the Cleveland Indians in 2016.



MIGUEL CABRERA

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3 CWS	4	5 CWS	6 CWS	7 BOS	8 BOS
9 BOS	10 BOS	11 MIN	12 MIN	13 MIN	14 CLE	15 CLE
16 CLE	17	18 TB	19 TB	20 TB	21 MIN	22 MIN
23 MIN	24	25 SEA	26 SEA	27 SEA	28 CWS	29 CWS
30 CWS						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 CLE	2 CLE	3 CLE	4 CLE	5 OAK	6 OAK
7 OAK	8	9 ARI	10 ARI	11 LAA	12 LAA	13 LAA
14 LAA	15	16 BAL	17 BAL	18 BAL	19 TEX	20 TEX
21 TEX	22 HOU	23 HOU	24 HOU	25 HOU	26 CWS	27 CWS
28 CWS	29 KC	30 KC	31 KC			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2 CWS	3 CWS
4 CWS	5	6 LAA	7 LAA	8 LAA	9 BOS	10 BOS
11 BOS	12	13 ARI	14 ARI	15 TB	16 TB	17 TB
18 TB	19 SEA	20 SEA	21 SEA	22 SEA	23 SD	24 SD
25 SD	26	27 KC	28 KC	29 KC	30 CLE	

July

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 CLE
2 CLE	3	4 SF	5 SF	6 SF	7 CLE	8 CLE
9 CLE	10	11	12	13	14 TOR	15 TOR
16 TOR	17 KC	18 KC	19 KC	20 KC	21 MIN	22 MIN
23 MIN	24 KC	25 KC	26 KC	27	28 HOU	29 HOU
30 HOU	31 NYY					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 NYY	2 NYY	3 BAL	4 BAL	5 BAL
6 BAL	7 PIT	8 PIT	9 PIT	10 PIT	11 MIN	12 MIN
13 MIN	14 TEX	15 TEX	16 TEX	17	18 LAD	19 LAD
20 LAD	21	22 NYY	23 NYY	24 NYY	25 CWS	26 CWS
27 CWS	28 COL	29 COL	30 COL	31		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 CLE	2 CLE
3 CLE	4 KC	5 KC	6 KC	7	8 TOR	9 TOR
10 TOR	11 CLE	12 CLE	13 CLE	14 CWS	15 CWS	16 CWS
17 CWS	18 OAK	19 OAK	20 OAK	21 MIN	22 MIN	23 MIN
24 MIN	25	26 KC	27 KC	28 KC	29 MIN	30 MIN
1 MIN						

JUSTIN VERLANDER

age in 2016), but he regressed offensively last season, posting a paltry .629 OPS. In addition, the Tigers appeared ready to cut ties with veteran backup Jarrod Saltalamacchia, and the pool of potential replacements was thin. One of the candidates, in fact, was Alex Avila, the former Tigers starter and the son of GM Al Avila.

DH/BENCH The Tigers made a nice, sentimental move in December, adding veteran infielder Omar Infante on a minor-league contract, 15 years after Infante made his big-league debut with the Tigers. If he makes the team, it would be his third stint in Detroit. The question is, can he still play? If so, he could unseat Dixon Machado as the presumed utility infielder. Otherwise, the bench appears fairly well set, with Austin Romine back as a jack-of-all-trades reserve and Steven Moya and Tyler Collins around as extra outfielders. As for DH, the Tigers have been writing in Victor Martinez's name there for five years now, and he remains a middle-of-the-order fixture.

MANAGEMENT Avila appears to embrace the notion of a major, youth-focused overhaul, if not an outright rebuild, but acting on those impulses has proven harder to do. Then, too, plenty of observers expected him to fire Brad Ausmus as manager following the disappointment of 2016. But here is Ausmus, back for a fourth season after the Tigers picked up his option. He has no job security, however, and a bad start could portend trouble.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Tigers lost to the Indians by eight games in the AL Central in 2016, and it's difficult to envision where they expect to make up those eight games, given their lack of impact additions. Perhaps the Tigers saw the White Sox and Royals shift into rebuild mode and decided to go for it one last time with this core. But it still seems more likely that the Tigers, as currently constructed, will take a big step backward than a big one forward. By July, an out-of-contention Tigers team could look vastly different than the one of April.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

CY TALK The handing out of the 2016 Cy Young Awards was a bittersweet moment for Detroit fans, with ex-Tigers Rick Porcello (now with Boston) and Max Scherzer (Washington) winning in the AL and NL, respectively. Making matters worse, Porcello won despite the fact that Justin Verlander received more first-place votes (14 to 8). Worst of all: Porcello, Scherzer and Verlander were part of the same Tigers rotation for five years, yet failed to win a World Series title.

LET'S BE FRIENDS After a dugout confrontation at Triple-A Toledo in July between then-Mud Hens manager Lloyd McClendon and outfielder Anthony Gose, the Tigers demoted Gose to Double-A Erie for the rest of the season. But now, both Gose and McClendon will be at Lakeland for big-league spring training, with the former trying to win the starting center field job and the latter back in the big leagues as hitting coach.

FINANCIAL WOES The Tigers are trying to get younger and more athletic while getting under the luxury tax threshold, but they have $122 million already wrapped up in five players (Verlander, Miguel Cabrera, Jordan Zimmermann, Justin Upton and Victor Martinez) for 2018 and another $105 million for four players (all but Martinez) for 2019.

ROOKIE SENSATION Michael Fulmer's dazzling rookie season, capped by AL Rookie of the Year honors, was a clear highlight of 2016 for the Tigers. A product of the July 2015 Yoenis Cespedes trade, he didn't even make the Tigers' Opening Day rotation, and his two-pitch repertoire made some scouts skeptical about his chances for success. But after being called up to Detroit, Fulmer was encouraged to use his changeup by catcher James McCann, and it turned into arguably his best pitch.

VELO ISSUES Zimmermann had injections to relieve neck pain in December and was due for another round in January. Manager Brad Ausmus said the Tigers had to "hold our breath" about his health for 2017. Zimmermann, 30, saw his average fastball velocity decline from 94.58 mph in 2014 and 93.44 in 2015 to 92.59 in 2016, the first year of a five-year, $110 million contract.

SWING AND A MISS The Tigers struck out a franchise-record 1,303 times in 2016, and Ausmus vowed to make putting the ball in play more frequently a core part of his spring training address to his hitters. Among the worst offenders last season were Upton, who struck out in 28.6 percent of his plate appearances, and McCann (29.2 percent).

Tom DiPace

TIGERS ROSTER

General Manager: Al Avila **Manager:** Brad Ausmus **Coaches:** Mick Billmeyer (bullpen), Dave Clark (third base), Rich Dubee (pitching), Leon Durham (asst. hitting), Gene Lamont (bench), Matt Martin (defense), Lloyd McClendon (hitting), Omar Vizquel (first base)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
	Ruben Alaniz	R-R	6-4	219	6/14/91	Toledo (AAA)	0-1	2.52	18	0	0	25.0	22	11	25
						Erie (AA)	4-3	2.77	34	0	4	48.2	50	18	49
	Victor Alcantara	R-R	6-2	190	4/3/93	Arkansas (AA)	3-7	4.30	29	20	0	111.0	106	57	79
	Sandy Baez	R-R	6-2	180	11/25/93	Western Michigan (A)	7-9	3.81	21	21	0	113.1	125	28	88
	Chad Bell	R-L	6-3	200	2/28/89	Round Rock (AAA)	1-0	1.50	5	2	0	18.0	12	5	19
						Toledo (AAA)	10-4	3.70	28	10	0	80.1	79	38	69
48	Matt Boyd	L-L	6-3	215	2/2/91	**DETROIT**	**6-5**	**4.53**	**20**	**18**	**0**	**97.1**	**97**	**29**	**82**
						Toledo (AAA)	2-5	2.25	11	11	0	64.0	53	18	57
45	Buck Farmer	L-R	6-4	225	2/20/91	**DETROIT**	**0-1**	**4.60**	**14**	**1**	**0**	**29.1**	**25**	**20**	**27**
						Toledo (AAA)	5-6	3.96	20	20	0	100.0	106	28	93
32	Michael Fulmer	R-R	6-3	210	3/15/93	**DETROIT**	**11-7**	**3.06**	**26**	**26**	**0**	**159.0**	**136**	**42**	**132**
						Toledo (AAA)	1-1	4.11	3	3	0	15.1	16	5	20
61	Shane Greene	R-R	6-4	210	11/17/88	**DETROIT**	**5-4**	**5.82**	**50**	**3**	**2**	**60.1**	**58**	**22**	**59**
65	Blaine Hardy	L-L	6-2	215	3/14/87	**DETROIT**	**1-0**	**3.51**	**21**	**0**	**0**	**25.2**	**25**	**12**	**20**
						Toledo (AAA)	1-0	1.72	32	0	1	31.1	20	5	19
						Lakeland (A)	0-0	6.00	2	2	0	3.0	2	1	6
	Myles Jaye	S-R	6-3	170	12/28/91	Toledo (AAA)	1-4	3.69	7	7	0	39.0	30	12	31
						Erie (AA)	4-8	4.04	21	21	0	122.2	127	29	104
53	Jairo Labourt	L-L	6-4	205	3/7/94	Lakeland (A)	7-9	5.26	30	12	1	87.1	65	70	81
21	Mark Lowe	L-R	6-3	210	6/7/83	**DETROIT**	**1-3**	**7.11**	**54**	**0**	**0**	**49.1**	**57**	**21**	**49**
60	Angel Nesbitt	R-R	6-1	240	12/4/90	Toledo (AAA)	1-1	5.68	28	0	0	31.2	48	14	24
						Erie (AA)	1-1	3.65	11	0	0	12.1	13	2	13
						Lakeland (A)	0-0	2.45	3	3	0	3.2	2	3	5
44	Daniel Norris	L-L	6-2	195	4/25/93	**DETROIT**	**4-2**	**3.38**	**14**	**13**	**0**	**69.1**	**75**	**22**	**71**
						Toledo (AAA)	5-7	4.54	14	14	0	73.1	78	28	77
						Erie (AA)	1-0	4.05	1	1	0	6.2	5	3	7
						Lakeland (A)	0-0	4.50	2	2	0	6.0	9	1	7
37	Mike Pelfrey	R-R	6-7	240	1/14/84	**DETROIT**	**4-10**	**5.07**	**24**	**22**	**0**	**119.0**	**160**	**46**	**56**
						Toledo (AAA)	0-0	8.53	2	2	0	6.1	12	0	3
57	Francisco Rodriguez	R-R	6-0	195	1/7/82	**DETROIT**	**3-4**	**3.24**	**61**	**0**	**44**	**58.1**	**45**	**21**	**52**
43	Bruce Rondon	R-R	6-3	275	12/9/90	**DETROIT**	**5-2**	**2.97**	**37**	**0**	**0**	**36.1**	**23**	**12**	**45**
						Toledo (AAA)	2-2	3.74	22	0	9	21.2	23	16	30
56	Kyle Ryan	L-L	6-5	215	9/25/91	**DETROIT**	**4-2**	**3.07**	**56**	**0**	**0**	**55.2**	**48**	**15**	**35**
						Toledo (AAA)	0-0	0.00	8	0	0	7.0	3	6	5
19	Anibal Sanchez	R-R	6-0	205	2/27/84	**DETROIT**	**7-13**	**5.87**	**35**	**26**	**0**	**153.1**	**171**	**53**	**135**
53	Warwick Saupold	R-R	6-1	195	1/16/90	**DETROIT**	**1-1**	**7.45**	**6**	**0**	**0**	**9.2**	**17**	**3**	**10**
						Toledo (AAA)	7-2	2.30	18	11	0	74.1	64	22	50
						Lakeland (A)	0-0	1.59	2	2	0	5.2	7	4	1
	Daniel Stumpf	L-L	6-2	200	1/4/91	**PHILADELPHIA**	**0-0**	**10.80**	**7**	**0**	**0**	**5.0**	**9**	**2**	**2**
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	0-0	20.25	2	0	0	1.1	4	0	1
						Reading (AA)	1-0	4.50	3	0	0	4.0	3	1	3
						Clearwater (A)	0-0	3.00	2	0	0	3.0	2	0	1
						NW Arkansas (AA)	2-0	2.11	14	0	1	21.1	14	4	26
54	Drew VerHagen	R-R	6-6	230	10/22/90	**DETROIT**	**1-0**	**7.11**	**19**	**0**	**0**	**19.0**	**28**	**7**	**10**
35	Justin Verlander	R-R	6-5	225	2/20/83	**DETROIT**	**16-9**	**3.04**	**34**	**34**	**0**	**227.2**	**171**	**57**	**254**
30	Alex Wilson	R-R	6-0	215	11/3/86	**DETROIT**	**4-0**	**2.96**	**62**	**0**	**0**	**73.0**	**68**	**21**	**49**
38	Justin Wilson	L-L	6-2	205	8/18/87	**DETROIT**	**4-5**	**4.14**	**66**	**0**	**1**	**58.2**	**61**	**17**	**65**
27	Jordan Zimmermann	R-R	6-2	225	5/23/86	**DETROIT**	**9-7**	**4.87**	**19**	**18**	**0**	**105.1**	**118**	**26**	**66**
						Toledo (AAA)	0-1	1.33	5	5	0	20.1	19	4	11

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	Alex Avila	L-R	5-11	210	1/29/87	**CHICAGO AL**	.213	57	169	19	36	7	11	38	78	38
	Miguel Gonzalez	R-R	5-11	220	12/3/90	Toledo (AAA)	.243	66	214	17	52	2	33	18	46	0
55	John Hicks	R-R	6-2	230	8/31/89	**DETROIT**	**.500**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
						Toledo (AAA)	.303	70	241	38	73	8	42	17	59	3
						Erie (AA)	.388	14	49	7	19	1	4	4	9	1
						Rochester (AAA)	.242	9	33	1	8	1	1	1	5	0
34	James McCann	R-R	6-2	210	6/13/90	**DETROIT**	**.221**	**105**	**344**	**31**	**76**	**12**	**48**	**23**	**109**	**0**
						Toledo (AAA)	.091	6	22	2	2	0	2	5	6	0

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
24	Miguel Cabrera	R-R	6-4	240	4/18/83	**DETROIT**	**.316**	**158**	**595**	**92**	**188**	**38**	**108**	**75**	**116**	**0**
9	Nick Castellanos	R-R	6-4	210	3/4/92	**DETROIT**	**.285**	**110**	**411**	**54**	**117**	**18**	**58**	**28**	**111**	**1**
1	Jose Iglesias	R-R	5-11	185	1/5/90	**DETROIT**	**.255**	**137**	**467**	**57**	**119**	**4**	**32**	**28**	**50**	**7**
						Toledo (AAA)	.375	4	16	2	6	1	1	0	0	0
	Omar Infante	R-R	5-11	195	12/26/81	**KANSAS CITY**	**.239**	**39**	**134**	**16**	**32**	**0**	**11**	**9**	**23**	**0**
						Gwinnett (AAA)	.209	27	110	8	23	1	9	3	16	0
40	JaCoby Jones	R-R	6-2	205	5/10/92	**DETROIT**	**.214**	**13**	**28**	**3**	**6**	**0**	**2**	**0**	**12**	**0**
						Toledo (AAA)	.243	79	292	33	71	3	23	25	97	11
						Erie (AA)	.312	20	77	11	24	4	20	10	23	2
3	Ian Kinsler	R-R	6-0	200	6/22/82	**DETROIT**	**.288**	**153**	**618**	**117**	**178**	**28**	**83**	**45**	**115**	**14**
49	Dixon Machado	R-R	6-1	170	2/22/92	**DETROIT**	**.100**	**8**	**10**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**3**	**4**	**0**
						Toledo (AAA)	.266	131	492	59	131	4	48	58	75	17
41	Victor Martinez	S-R	6-2	210	12/23/78	**DETROIT**	**.289**	**154**	**553**	**65**	**160**	**27**	**86**	**50**	**90**	**0**
17	Andrew Romine	S-R	6-1	200	12/24/85	**DETROIT**	**.236**	**108**	**174**	**21**	**41**	**2**	**16**	**13**	**38**	**8**

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
18	Tyler Collins	L-L	5-11	215	6/6/90	**DETROIT**	**.235**	**56**	**136**	**14**	**32**	**4**	**15**	**13**	**38**	**1**
						Toledo (AAA)	.214	68	257	29	55	7	30	20	69	4
12	Anthony Gose	L-L	6-1	190	8/10/90	**DETROIT**	**.209**	**30**	**91**	**11**	**19**	**2**	**7**	**9**	**38**	**0**
						Toledo (AAA)	.185	50	184	22	34	1	13	15	75	6
						Erie (AA)	.224	40	156	16	35	6	27	17	54	11
28	J.D. Martinez	R-R	6-3	220	8/21/87	**DETROIT**	**.307**	**120**	**460**	**69**	**141**	**22**	**68**	**49**	**128**	**1**
						Toledo (AAA)	.278	8	36	3	10	0	5	1	11	1
33	Steven Moya	L-R	6-7	260	8/9/91	**DETROIT**	**.255**	**31**	**94**	**9**	**24**	**5**	**11**	**5**	**38**	**0**
						Toledo (AAA)	.284	97	409	60	116	20	66	15	96	3
8	Justin Upton	R-R	6-2	205	8/25/87	**DETROIT**	**.246**	**153**	**570**	**81**	**140**	**31**	**87**	**50**	**179**	**9**

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

MATT MANNING, RHP

Armed with the ninth overall pick in 2016, their highest draft position since 2009, the Tigers took a high school pitcher with their top choice for the second straight year. Manning, a hard-throwing righthander from Sacramento, is widely viewed as a future front-end starter, and he quickly shot to the top of the Tigers' prospect lists. A former basketball star who stands 6'6", Manning has a fastball that sits in the mid-90s and touches the high-90s, plus a promising curve and changeup. His performance in rookie ball last season only increased the buzz around him; in 29.1 innings, he had a 3.99 ERA while striking out 14.1 batters per nine innings with only 2.1 walks. Because he is only 19, he remains years away from the majors and will probably start 2017, his first full professional season, in Low-A.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Matt Manning, RHP (19) His height (6'6") and athleticism give him easy velocity, and the Tigers expect him to rise quickly. Unlikely he'll be in majors before 2020, though.

2. Christin Stewart, OF (23) A compensation-round pick in 2015, he hit 30 homers last year at High-A and Double-A, then had a solid showing in the Arizona Fall League.

3. Beau Burrows, RHP (20) The 2015 first-rounder spent 2016 in Low-A ball, posting a 3.15 ERA in 20 starts and remaining on track for a potential 2019 arrival in Detroit.

4. Kyle Funkhouser, RHP (23) The 2016 fourth-rounder rediscovered the fastball life that had deserted him as a collegian and excelled at short-season Single-A.

5. Joe Jimenez, RHP (22) Reliever rose all the way from High-A to Triple-A in 2016, maintaining his superb numbers. Will almost certainly appear in Detroit in 2017.

6. Tyler Alexander, LHP (22) A 2015 second-rounder, he earned a midseason promotion from High-A to Double-A in 2016 and fared well there.

7. Derek Hill, OF (21) Injuries, strikeouts and general rawness have hampered the 2014 first-rounder, but quick wrists and legit, elite speed make him one to watch.

8. JaCoby Jones, OF/3B (24) Blistering start at Double-A in 2016 earned quick promotion to Triple-A and a brief call-up to Detroit; he'll be in the mix for a big-league outfield job.

9. Mike Gerber, OF (24) Unheralded 15th-rounder in 2014 has succeeded at every level, including Double-A in 2016. Could be a midseason call-up in Detroit this season.

10. Adam Ravenelle, RHP (24) Struggled after promotion to Double-A, but earned a "Fall Stars" nod in Arizona Fall League. If he gains command, he can help the Tigers soon.

KANSAS CITY ROYALS

Kansas City's championship window is closing. The cash-strapped Royals set a franchise record with a $131.5 million payroll in 2016, but team owner David Glass instructed general manager Dayton Moore to scale back for 2017. The Royals aren't in fire-sale mode, but shipping impending free-agent closer Wade Davis to the Cubs for outfielder Jorge Soler, who is under club control through 2020, clearly was a cost-cutting move.

With the bulk of its two-time American League championship core — center fielder Lorenzo Cain, first baseman Eric Hosmer, third baseman Mike Moustakas, shortstop Alcides Escobar and lefthander Danny Duffy — set for free agency next offseason, the edict to trim spending handcuffed Moore from making a free-agent splash like he did last offseason, when he signed Alex Gordon and Ian Kennedy to the richest contracts in franchise history. Still, the Royals, who slipped back to .500 last season, hope for one final run before the expected dismantling.

ROTATION The Royals ranked 12th in the American League with a 4.67 ERA from the starting rotation. Duffy, a 28-year-old lefthander, emerged as the club's ace, finishing 12–3 with a 3.51 ERA in 26 starts after beginning 2016 as a reliever. His continued development as a front-of-the-rotation star will be critical. Kennedy — who is entering the second season of a five-year, $70 million deal — also is locked into the rotation with enigmatic fireballer Yordano Ventura and veteran lefthander Jason Vargas. Kennedy pitched to expectations in a solid Kansas City debut, but "Ace" Ventura, as he became known after a dazzling 2014 season, regressed for the second straight season. Vargas has been limited to 12 games during the last two seasons after Tommy John surgery in August 2015. When healthy, he's been solid for the Royals, going 16–12 with a 3.68 ERA as a 2014 free-agent signing. His return fills Edinson Volquez's hole in the rotation after he signed with the Marlins. Veteran righthander Chris Young and lefthander Matt Strahm, who posted a 1.23 ERA in 21 relief appearances after a late-July call-up, will battle for the fifth spot with lefthander Mike Minor as a dark horse.

BULLPEN The Royals' relief corps was the backbone of back-to-back pennants, but the glory days of HDH — when a relay from Kelvin Herrera to Davis to Greg Holland dominated the final three innings — are a fleeting memory. Holland sat out 2016 after Tommy John surgery, and Davis, who was set to make $10 million this season, was traded away. The Royals also cut ties with former No. 1 overall pick Luke Hochevar among other bullpen losses. Herrera — who owns a 182 ERA+ the last three seasons, including a 2.75 ERA with 86 strikeouts against 12 walks and 57 hits in 72 innings last season — is the new closer, a role he's expected to flourish in after saving a career-high 12 games last season with Davis sidelined. Unless he wins a rotation spot, Strahm and veteran righthander Joakim Soria project as the club's setup men. Soria — a 2016 free agent who signed a three-year, $25 million deal — was a disappointment in his return to Kansas City, going 5–8 with a 4.05 ERA.

MIDDLE INFIELD For the second time in three seasons, Escobar started all 162 games at shortstop for the Royals in 2016. He set modest career highs with seven home runs and 55 RBIs last season, but he also had the fourth-lowest OPS among qualified batters (.642). The 30-year-old shortstop has slashed .259/.293/.335 the last two seasons, but he remains a solid defensive player at a premium position. Kansas City is hopeful Raul Mondesi can emerge as the everyday second baseman. He's a slick-fielding speedster and the heir apparent at shortstop, but he'll only find a regular spot if his bat comes around. If not, Whit Merrifield gets the nod at second base after a solid rookie season.

CORNERS Moustakas and Hosmer served as linchpins for the Royals' title-winning youth movement, but there's no chance both will remain in Kansas City beyond next season. Moustakas hit well last season, including a career-best .500 slugging percentage, in 27 games before suffering a season-ending torn ACL in his right knee May 22 after a collision with Gordon. The Royals hope he can recapture the All-Star form he first flashed in 2015 when he slashed .284/.348/.470 with 34 doubles, 22 home runs and 82 RBIs. Hosmer, who isn't an elite fielder despite a Gold Glove reputation, also regressed last season at the plate despite obliterating his career highs with 25 home runs and 104 RBIs.

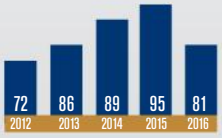
OUTFIELD The Royals' outfield defense is stout with Gordon, Cain and Paulo Orlando from left to right field. Cain had emerged as a star in recent years, posting a 118 OPS+ with a .304/.351/.447 slash line in 2014-15. He averaged 47 extra-base hits and 28 steals during that span and also plays sparkling defense at a premium position. However, Cain missed time with hamstring and wrist injuries last season, which tamped down his production. Injuries also derailed Gordon the last two seasons, including lengthy absences

2017 PREDICTION
3rd
AL Central

2016 RECORD
81-81

HOME: 47-34 **ROAD:** 34-47

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND



TEAM INFO

KAUFFMAN STADIUM
Opened: 1973 **Capacity:** 40,933
Left: 330' **Center:** 410' **Right:** 330'
Tickets: 866-339-4364
kansascity.royals.mlb.com

FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
1B Eric Hosmer

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
LHP Danny Duffy

BULL MARKET
RHP Kelvin Herrera

BEAR MARKET
OF Jarrod Dyson

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
3B Mike Moustakas

IPO LHP Matt Strahm

FUTURES MARKET OF Jorge Bonifacio

INSIDER TIP With the Royals on the decline and liable to go "full youth" by midseason, get in early on kids such as Strahm, Bonifacio, Raul Mondesi, Josh Staumont and Hunter Dozier.

STATLINE

AVG ON FIRST-PITCH CONTACT: 2016

1. Paulo Orlando, Royals	**.521**
2. Freddie Freeman, Braves	.494
3. Scooter Gennett, Brewers	.474
4. Yadier Molina, Cardinals	.417
5. Robinson Cano, Mariners	.416

(min. 75 contacts)

Tom DiPace

PROJECTED LINEUP

LINEUP

SS	Alcides Escobar (R)
3B	Mike Moustakas (L)
CF	Lorenzo Cain (R)
1B	Eric Hosmer (L)
DH	Jorge Soler (R)
LF	Alex Gordon (L)
C	**Salvador Perez (R)**
RF	Paulo Orlando (R)
2B	Raul Mondesi (S)

BENCH

OF	Billy Burns (S)
C	Drew Butera (R)
3B	Cheslor Cuthbert (R)
OF	**Jarrod Dyson (L)**
2B	Whit Merrifield (R)

ROTATION

RHP	**Ian Kennedy**
LHP	Danny Duffy
RHP	Yordano Ventura
LHP	Jason Vargas
RHP	Chris Young

BULLPEN

RHP	**Kelvin Herrera (Closer)**
RHP	Joakim Soria
LHP	Matt Strahm
LHP	Brian Flynn
LHP	Mike Minor
RHP	Kevin McCarthy

NEXT LEVEL

Salvador Perez was one of the most aggressive hitters in baseball, finishing with 3.43 pitches per plate appearance — the fewest in MLB. His 55.2 percent swing rate was eighth highest among qualified hitters.

Jarrod Dyson stole 30 or more bases for the fourth time in five years. His 84.8 percent success rate is best for those with at least 125 steals during that stretch.

Ian Kennedy's ERA (3.68) was almost a full run lower than his FIP (4.67). He had the biggest differential in the AL among qualified starters.

Despite his ERA remaining almost the same as 2015, Kelvin Herrera showed massive improvement. His strikeout rate jumped from 22.4 to 30.4 percent, and his walk rate fell from 9.1 to 4.2 percent.

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE ROYALS

"They're talented and they've done it, so nobody likes facing them. They're going for it again, but honestly it's hard to take them seriously as contenders with that rotation. Danny Duffy had a big year, but his track record's not great, and it's thin beyond him. I'm eager to see what they have in Jorge Soler. I think he'll be an average everyday player who may not live up to the tools, but those tools are intriguing. The inconsistencies in his approach may keep him from being the impact guy they're hoping for, but we'll see if the Royals, with their contact-oriented approach, can change that. Trading Wade Davis to get him makes them just another bullpen, which is sure not ideal with that rotation. They've got Eric Hosmer, Lorenzo Cain, Alcides Escobar and Mike Moustakas in their walk year, but they're guys who rise to the occasion when facing pressure."

STATISTICIAN

-20.0	Eric Hosmer's defensive runs above average rating in 2016, according to Fan Graphs, which was the second worst for all position players in baseball.
8	Intentional walks issued by the Royals last season, the fewest in baseball. Twenty-seven teams issued at least twice as many, led by the Marlins (62).
14	Decline in the number of wins for the Royals from 2015 (95–67) to 2016 (81–81) after six consecutive seasons winning more games than the previous season.
382	Walks by Royals batters last season, a major-league low.
95	Double plays turned at shortstop last season for Alcides Escobar, which was third in the American League.
506	Major-league-high number of outs made in 2016 by Alcides Escobar. Houston's George Springer (499) was the only other player to account for more than 485 outs.

ERIC HOSMER

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3 MIN	4	5 MIN	6 MIN	7 HOU	8 HOU
9 HOU	10 OAK	11	12 OAK	13 OAK	14 LAA	15 LAA
16 LAA	17	18 SF	19 SF	20 TEX	21 TEX	22 TEX
23 TEX	24 CWS	25 CWS	26 CWS	27	28 MIN	29 MIN
30 MIN						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 CWS	2 CWS	3 CWS	4 CWS	5 CLE	6 CLE
7 CLE	8 TB	9 TB	10 TB	11 TB	12 BAL	13 BAL
14 BAL	15	16 NYY	17 NYY	18 NYY	19 MIN	20 MIN
21 MIN	22 NYY	23 NYY	24 NYY	25 NYY	26 CLE	27 CLE
28 CLE	29 DET	30 DET	31 DET			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2 CLE	3 CLE
4 CLE	5 HOU	6 HOU	7 HOU	8 HOU	9 SD	10 SD
11 SD	12	13 SF	14 SF	15 LAA	16 LAA	17 LAA
18 LAA	19 BOS	20 BOS	21 BOS	22	23 TOR	24 TOR
25 TOR	26	27 DET	28 DET	29 DET	30 MIN	

July

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 MIN
2 MIN	3 SEA	4 SEA	5 SEA	6	7 LAD	8 LAD
9 LAD	10	11	12	13	14 TEX	15 TEX
16 TEX	17 DET	18 DET	19 DET	20 DET	21 CWS	22 CWS
23 CWS	24 DET	25 DET	26 DET	27	28 BOS	29 BOS
30 BOS	31 BAL					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 BAL	2 BAL	3 SEA	4 SEA	5 SEA
6 SEA	7 STL	8 STL	9 STL	10 STL	11 CWS	12 CWS
13 CWS	14 OAK	15 OAK	16 OAK	17	18 CLE	19 CLE
20 CLE	21	22 COL	23 COL	24 COL	25 CLE	26 CLE
27 CLE	28 TB	29 TB	30 TB	31		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 MIN	2 MIN
3 MIN	4 DET	5 DET	6 DET	7 MIN	8 MIN	9 MIN
10 MIN	11 CWS	12 CWS	13 CWS	14 CLE	15 CLE	16 CLE
17 CLE	18	19 TOR	20 TOR	21 TOR	22 CWS	23 CWS
24 CWS	25	26 DET	27 DET	28 DET	29 ARI	30 ARI
1 ARI						

SALVADOR PEREZ

due to groin and wrist injuries. The Royals need Gordon to revert to the player who slashed .281/.359/.450 from 2011-15 after he was a shockingly bad .220/.312/.380 last season. The newly acquired Soler could poach time in right field from Orlando, if first base coach Rusty Kuntz can work a miracle with Soler's sub-par defense.

CATCHING Behind the plate, the Royals have a four-time All-Star and four-time Gold Glove winner in Salvador Perez, who added his first career Silver Slugger last season. Perez struck out far too much in 2016 and has slashed .256/.286/.421 the last three seasons, but he remains an elite catch-and-throw guy. Drew Butera is Perez's backup.

DH/BENCH Soler projects as the primary DH, but regulars with an injury history — think Perez, Moustakas, Gordon and Cain — could occasionally DH to save wear and tear without sacrificing lineup punch. Utility outfielder Jarrod Dyson was rumored to be on the offseason trade block. Cheslor Cuthbert can play anywhere on the infield except shortstop and proved valuable in extended action as Moustakas' replacement.

MANAGEMENT Manager Ned Yost, who at 549–550 owns the franchise's most managerial wins and losses, has shown a steady hand well suited for Moore's roster, but his decision-making will be tested in 2017 with less certainty in the bullpen. Yost's unflinching loyalty doesn't play well with fans when it comes off as stubbornness, as was the case when Soria floundered last season. More flexibility might be required moving forward.

FINAL ANALYSIS There's a looming fire sale if Kansas City falls from contention with changes to the collective bargaining agreement that restrict compensation for players lost in free agency. Don't expect Moore to be as aggressive as 2015 at the trade deadline with a depleted farm system. Health and player development will be key to squeezing out a playoff push from a roster that's already demonstrated its championship mettle.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

TV TROUBLE Before the 2008 season — at the height of the Royals' struggles — Fox Sports inked an 11-year TV rights deal with the club worth $20 million annually. Since then, the broadcast rights market has exploded, including billion-dollar deals for the Dodgers and Cardinals, but the Royals can't cash in despite shattering ratings records. Kansas City's next deal after 2019 will come too late to keep a bumper crop of 2017 free agents from moving on to richer teams with better broadcast-rights deals.

REKINDLING TWO-OUT MAGIC Among the more magical qualities of the Royals' 2015 run was a majors-best .279 average with two outs and runners in scoring position, but the fairy dust lost its potency in 2016. Kansas City's average in those situations declined to .245 with the club slugging 37 points lower and producing 25 fewer RBIs in such clutch situations.

READY TO CLOSE With Wade Davis now a Cub, Kelvin Herrera inherits the closer's role and some sizable shoes to fill. Herrera had only five career saves before racking up 12 last season with Davis sidelined by arm issues. Now the job belongs to Herrera permanently, and it's a good gamble for the cost-conscious Royals, considering he posted career lows for FIP (2.47), WHIP (0.958) and walks per 9 innings (1.5) with a massive jump in his strikeout-to-walk ratio from 2.46 in 2015 to 7.17 in 2016.

POTENT PEREZ Among full-time catchers since Salvador Perez reached the majors in 2011, he leads baseball with a 9.6 defensive WAR, according to baseball-reference.com. Last season, he led the AL by throwing out 37 would-be basestealers, which was 10 more than second-place James McCann of the Tigers. And he led baseball with a 48.1 caught-stealing percentage, the highest in the American League since Seattle's Kenji Johjima gunned down 53.7 percent in 2009.

FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH Chris Young was a revelation in 2015 — earning a two-year, $11.5 million deal (and a permanent spot in Kansas City fans' hearts) after going 11–6 with a 3.06 ERA in 34 appearances, including 18 starts. Last season, the 6'10", 37-year-old Princeton graduate wasn't able to duplicate that success. Far from it. He went 3–9 with a career-worst 6.19 ERA. Young's WHIP zoomed to 1.658. As a starter, it was even worse — 1–8 with a 7.39 ERA and 26 home runs allowed in 56 innings in 13 starts — but the Royals are gambling Young can rebound and solidify the rotation's back end.

Tom DiPace

ROYALS ROSTER

General Manager: Dayton Moore **Manager:** Ned Yost **Coaches:** Brian Buchanan (asst. hitting), Dave Eiland (pitching), Pedro Grifol (catching), Doug Henry (bullpen), Mike Jirschele (third base), Rusty Kuntz (first base), Dale Sveum (hitting), Don Wakamatsu (bench)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
54	Scott Alexander	L-L	6-2	190	7/10/89	**KANSAS CITY**	**0-0**	**3.32**	**17**	**0**	**0**	**19.0**	**24**	**7**	**16**
						Omaha (AAA)	2-0	3.00	22	0	1	30.0	32	10	24
						AZL Royals (R)	0-0	4.91	5	2	0	7.1	8	2	12
50	Miguel Almonte	R-R	6-2	210	4/4/93	Omaha (AAA)	3-7	5.55	21	12	0	60.0	63	42	57
						NW Arkansas (AA)	2-1	7.31	11	0	0	16.0	24	4	15
55	Tim Collins	L-L	5-7	166	8/21/89	Injured — Missed Season									
41	Danny Duffy	L-L	6-3	202	12/21/88	**KANSAS CITY**	**12-3**	**3.51**	**42**	**26**	**0**	**179.2**	**163**	**42**	**188**
	Andrew Edwards	R-R	6-6	265	10/7/91	Omaha (AAA)	0-1	5.40	32	0	5	43.1	44	29	51
						NW Arkansas (AA)	0-0	0.50	10	0	2	18.0	14	4	23
33	Brian Flynn	L-L	6-7	250	4/19/90	**KANSAS CITY**	**1-2**	**2.60**	**36**	**1**	**0**	**55.1**	**38**	**23**	**44**
						Omaha (AAA)	2-1	3.04	9	4	0	23.2	22	12	28
40	Kelvin Herrera	R-R	5-10	200	12/31/89	**KANSAS CITY**	**2-6**	**2.75**	**72**	**0**	**12**	**72.0**	**57**	**12**	**86**
	Jake Junis	R-R	6-2	225	9/16/92	Omaha (AAA)	1-3	7.20	6	6	0	30.0	39	7	26
						NW Arkansas (AA)	9-7	3.25	21	21	0	119.0	110	27	117
31	Ian Kennedy	R-R	6-0	200	12/19/84	**KANSAS CITY**	**11-11**	**3.68**	**33**	**33**	**0**	**195.2**	**173**	**66**	**184**
61	Kevin McCarthy	R-R	6-3	200	2/22/92	**KANSAS CITY**	**1-0**	**6.48**	**10**	**0**	**0**	**8.1**	**11**	**5**	**7**
						Omaha (AAA)	2-4	2.97	25	0	5	33.1	28	16	30
						NW Arkansas (AA)	3-2	3.12	22	0	11	34.2	26	8	29
63	Alec Mills	R-R	6-4	185	11/30/91	**KANSAS CITY**	**0-0**	**13.50**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**3.1**	**3**	**5**	**4**
						Omaha (AAA)	4-3	4.19	12	11	0	58.0	62	19	54
						NW Arkansas (AA)	1-2	2.39	12	12	0	67.2	57	12	68
66	Mike Minor	R-L	6-4	210	12/26/87	Omaha (AAA)	0-4	6.23	8	8	0	34.2	38	17	33
						NW Arkansas (AA)	0-0	3.52	2	2	0	7.2	5	5	12
48	Joakim Soria	R-R	6-3	200	5/18/84	**KANSAS CITY**	**5-8**	**4.05**	**70**	**0**	**1**	**66.2**	**70**	**27**	**68**
64	Matt Strahm	R-L	6-3	185	11/21/91	**KANSAS CITY**	**2-2**	**1.23**	**21**	**0**	**0**	**22.0**	**13**	**11**	**30**
						NW Arkansas (AA)	3-8	3.43	22	18	0	102.1	102	23	107
51	Jason Vargas	L-L	6-0	215	2/2/83	**KANSAS CITY**	**0-0**	**2.25**	**3**	**3**	**0**	**12.0**	**8**	**3**	**11**
						Omaha (AAA)	0-2	5.93	3	3	0	13.2	16	1	18
30	Yordano Ventura	R-R	6-0	180	6/3/91	**KANSAS CITY**	**11-12**	**4.45**	**32**	**32**	**0**	**186.0**	**190**	**78**	**144**
32	Chris Young	R-R	6-10	250	5/25/79	**KANSAS CITY**	**3-9**	**6.19**	**34**	**13**	**1**	**88.2**	**104**	**43**	**94**
45	Kyle Zimmer	R-R	6-3	225	9/13/91	NW Arkansas (AA)	0-1	0.00	1	1	0	1.0	1	2	2
						Wilmington (A)	0-1	1.93	2	2	0	4.2	3	4	9

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
9	Drew Butera	R-R	6-1	200	8/9/83	**KANSAS CITY**	**.285**	**55**	**123**	**18**	**35**	**4**	**16**	**8**	**36**	**0**
	Cam Gallagher	R-R	6-3	230	12/6/92	NW Arkansas (AA)	.259	91	301	23	78	4	24	37	52	2
13	Salvador Perez	R-R	6-3	240	5/10/90	**KANSAS CITY**	**.247**	**139**	**514**	**57**	**127**	**22**	**64**	**22**	**119**	**0**

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
24	Christian Colon	R-R	5-10	185	5/14/89	**KANSAS CITY**	**.231**	**54**	**147**	**13**	**34**	**1**	**13**	**11**	**31**	**0**
						Omaha (AAA)	.273	19	77	9	21	1	5	6	11	2
19	Cheslor Cuthbert	R-R	6-1	190	11/16/92	**KANSAS CITY**	**.274**	**128**	**475**	**49**	**130**	**12**	**46**	**32**	**96**	**2**
						Omaha (AAA)	.333	24	93	15	31	7	28	11	14	0
60	Hunter Dozier	R-R	604	220	8/22/91	**KANSAS CITY**	**.211**	**8**	**19**	**4**	**4**	**0**	**1**	**2**	**8**	**0**
						Omaha (AAA)	.294	103	391	65	115	15	54	40	100	3
						NW Arkansas (AA)	.305	26	95	14	29	8	21	14	23	4
	Samir Duenez	L-R	6-1	195	6/11/96	NW Arkansas (AA)	.278	14	54	4	15	0	9	5	12	2
						Wilmington (A)	.300	56	213	30	64	7	42	19	34	10
						Lexington (A)	.272	68	265	30	72	6	49	15	40	14
2	Alcides Escobar	R-R	6-1	185	12/16/86	**KANSAS CITY**	**.261**	**162**	**637**	**57**	**166**	**7**	**55**	**27**	**96**	**17**
35	Eric Hosmer	L-L	6-4	225	10/24/89	**KANSAS CITY**	**.266**	**158**	**605**	**80**	**161**	**25**	**104**	**57**	**132**	**5**
15	Whit Merrifield	R-R	6-0	190	1/24/89	**KANSAS CITY**	**.283**	**81**	**311**	**44**	**88**	**2**	**29**	**19**	**72**	**8**
						Omaha (AAA)	.266	69	274	46	73	8	29	22	55	20
27	Raul Mondesi	S-R	6-1	185	7/27/95	**KANSAS CITY**	**.185**	**47**	**135**	**16**	**25**	**2**	**13**	**6**	**48**	**9**
						Omaha (AAA)	.304	14	56	9	17	1	9	2	19	5
						NW Arkansas (AA)	.259	29	116	20	30	5	17	13	30	17
						Wilmington (A)	.243	9	37	5	9	1	4	2	11	2
8	Mike Moustakas	L-R	6-0	211	9/11/88	**KANSAS CITY**	**.240**	**27**	**104**	**12**	**25**	**7**	**13**	**9**	**13**	**0**
62	Ramon Torres	S-R	5-11	170	1/22/93	Omaha (AAA)	.259	73	297	35	77	2	21	15	61	12
						NW Arkansas (AA)	.268	41	164	20	44	1	8	18	18	9

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
38	Jorge Bonifacio	R-R	6-1	195	6/4/93	NW Arkansas (AA)	.277	134	495	82	137	19	86	51	130	6
14	Billy Burns	S-R	5-9	170	8/30/89	**KANSAS CITY**	**.243**	**24**	**37**	**7**	**9**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**7**	**3**
						OAKLAND	**.234**	**73**	**274**	**32**	**64**	**0**	**12**	**10**	**30**	**14**
						Nashville (AAA)	.293	10	41	7	12	0	4	2	12	4
6	Lorenzo Cain	R-R	6-2	205	4/13/86	**KANSAS CITY**	**.287**	**103**	**397**	**56**	**114**	**9**	**56**	**31**	**84**	**14**
						Omaha (AAA)	.375	2	8	0	3	0	0	0	1	0
1	Jarrod Dyson	L-R	5-10	160	8/15/84	**KANSAS CITY**	**.278**	**107**	**299**	**46**	**83**	**1**	**25**	**26**	**39**	**30**
						Omaha (AAA)	.318	7	22	7	7	0	1	4	4	4
4	Alex Gordon	L-R	6-1	220	2/10/84	**KANSAS CITY**	**.220**	**128**	**445**	**62**	**98**	**17**	**40**	**52**	**148**	**8**
						Omaha (AAA)	.429	2	7	0	3	0	3	3	2	0
						NW Arkansas (AA)	.333	4	15	3	5	1	2	2	4	0
0	Terrance Gore	R-R	5-7	165	6/8/91	**KANSAS CITY**	**.000**	**17**	**3**	**6**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**11**
						NW Arkansas (AA)	.233	88	253	31	59	0	11	26	58	44
16	Paulo Orlando	R-R	6-2	210	11/1/85	**KANSAS CITY**	**.302**	**128**	**457**	**52**	**138**	**5**	**43**	**13**	**105**	**14**
	Jorge Soler	R-R	6-4	215	2/25/92	**CHICAGO NL**	**.238**	**86**	**227**	**37**	**54**	**12**	**31**	**31**	**66**	**0**
						Iowa (AAA)	.143	2	7	0	1	0	0	0	5	0
						Tennessee (AA)	.167	9	30	4	5	0	2	11	11	0
11	Bubba Starling	R-R	6-4	210	8/3/92	NW Arkansas (AA)	.185	62	233	28	43	5	23	15	81	10
						Omaha (AAA)	.181	47	166	14	30	2	17	7	64	1

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

A.J. PUCKETT, RHP

Puckett, 21, is a 6'4" starter from Pepperdine with a fastball that sits in the low-to-mid-90s, a solid changeup and an improving curveball. He's got a reputation as a strike thrower with above-average command. Puckett went 2–4 with a 3.68 ERA in 13 starts, including 45 strikeouts against 15 walks in 58.2 innings combined at Class A Lexington and in the Arizona Fall League. He went 9–3 with a 1.27 ERA, including 95 strikeouts and only 26 walks, in 99.1 innings last spring en route to West Coast Conference Pitcher of the Year honors. He tossed 45.2 consecutive scoreless innings at one point, the third-longest streak in NCAA history, and went 57.1 innings between earned runs allowed. Puckett spent two weeks in a medically induced coma after a head injury before his junior year in high school and still has metal plates in his skull.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Josh Staumont, RHP (23) Throws 100 mph with ease; walked the most batters in the minors last season (104) but also posted the top strikeout rate at 12.2 per nine innings.

2. Hunter Dozier, 3B/OF (25) Enjoyed a big-league cup of coffee, appearing in eight games last season. Slashed .296/.366/.533 in 129 games with Class AA-AAA last season, socking 23 home runs with 44 doubles.

3. Matt Strahm, LHP (25) Former 21st-round pick went 2–2 with a 1.23 ERA in 22 big-league innings. Might serve as Kelvin Herrera's setup man.

4. Erik Skoglund, LHP (24) Posted 3.45 ERA at Class AA last season with 134 strikeouts, 135 hits and 38 walks in 156.1 innings.

5. Jorge Bonifacio, OF (23) Slashed .277/.351/.461 last season at Class AAA with 47 extra-base hits, including 19 home runs, to go with 82 runs and 86 RBIs.

6. Kyle Zimmer, RHP (25) Health issues derailed his ascent. Zimmer made three appearances last season before surgery to fix thoracic outlet syndrome.

7. A.J. Puckett, RHP (21) Originally drafted in the 35th round by the Athletics in 2013, Puckett could factor in the Royals' 2019 rotation.

8. Scott Blewett, RHP (20) Went 8–11 with a 4.31 ERA during second season at Low-A Lexington; low-90s fastball shows promise.

9. Chase Vallot, C (20) He's a work in progress defensively and at the plate, considering a 34 percent swing-and-miss rate in his first two minor-league seasons. His power potential has him on this list.

10. Ryan O'Hearn, 1B (23) Smashed 22 homers with 32 doubles in Class A-AA last season, but the whiff rate needs improvement.

MINNESOTA TWINS

Coming off a 103-loss nightmare, the post-Terry Ryan era begins with an attempt to right the ship. The newly hired team of chief baseball officer Derek Falvey and general manager Thad Levine pledged to do their part to build a team capable of sustainable success.

Veteran catcher Jason Castro was brought in via free agency on a three-year, $24.5 million contract, the richest for an outside free-agent position player in franchise history. Beyond that, there were only modest adjustments. A blockbuster trade involving second baseman Brian Dozier continued to be discussed into the new year, but the Los Angeles Dodgers appeared unwilling to meet the Twins' lofty asking price for the 42-homer man.

With the reigning pennant winners from Cleveland (Falvey's former employer) ramping up for another long postseason run, the Twins joined their other three division rivals in cutting back on payroll, at least modestly. Whether that means another year or two of pain before the Twins' contention window reopens remains to be seen.

ROTATION A lesser man might have exploded at some point amid the second-worst run support in the majors, but veteran righthander Ervin Santana somehow maintained a sunny disposition throughout a 7–11 season that saw him finish 10th in the American League with a 3.38 ERA. Now 34, Santana has two years (plus an option) left on his contract, but the Twins seem intent on keeping him for now to front baseball's worst rotation. Lefthander Hector Santiago, acquired at the Aug. 1 trade deadline in a swap with the Los Angeles Angels, reversed a miserable four-start introduction with the Twins and should prove a valuable innings-eater, if nothing else, as he enters his walk year. Sinkerball specialist Kyle Gibson still doesn't miss many bats, but he's solid on and off the field. Veteran Phil Hughes is coming off a double whammy of a broken leg and surgery to correct thoracic outlet syndrome, but he's expected to be ready for spring training. The final rotation spot could fall to one of several young righthanders: Jose Berrios, Tyler Duffey or Trevor May. Berrios, shelled to the tune of an 8.02 ERA in 14 starts as a rookie, enters as the favorite.

BULLPEN Journeyman Brandon Kintzler was a revelation after stepping into the closer's role in mid-June, nailing down 17 of 20 save chances. He could open 2017 in that same capacity as three-time All-Star Glen Perkins tries to work back from shoulder surgery in late June. Setup man Ryan Pressly opened eyes with his improved velocity, and rookie Taylor Rogers made a successful conversion from minor-league starter to situational lefty in the majors. Hard-throwing righties J.T. Chargois and Michael Tonkin remain to take up the slack if May earns one of the starting spots.

MIDDLE INFIELD Thirty-three of Dozier's homers came in a dizzying span of 73 games that started on June 25 at Yankee Stadium and carried through Sept. 14 at Detroit's Comerica Park. Entering his age-30 season, Dozier knows he still must prove himself to a legion of skeptics, but the fact remains he has averaged 28 homers over the past four seasons since making the permanent switch from shortstop. He probably doesn't get enough credit for his defense, baserunning and leadership, so any decision to deal him with two years left on his contract must be taken quite seriously. Switch-hitting Jorge Polanco has excellent plate discipline at 23, but his defensive skills, especially his arm, profile better at second than short.

CORNERS It took a hamstring strain to liberate Miguel Sano from an ill-fated experiment in right field, but the rust was apparent once he returned to his natural spot at third base. A late-season flare-up in his surgically repaired throwing elbow proved no cause for lingering concern, so the Twins opted to cut ties with incumbent Trevor Plouffe as he entered his final year of arbitration. Joe Mauer, who turns 34 in April, struggled to stay on the field over the final six weeks due to a quadriceps strain. Unable to maintain a sizzling start, the six-time All-Star figures to see increased time as the designated hitter.

OUTFIELD Scouts always caution against reading too much into September stats, especially when a team is out of the playoff race, but Byron Buxton hit as if the light finally went on in his fourth crack at the majors. His defense in center field was every bit as impressive as expected, but he was still getting the hang of basestealing at the highest level. Fellow rookie Max Kepler had the opposite experience, sagging over the final six weeks after showing a surprising power stroke across the midseason portion. Lefties continued to trouble him, so it's possible switch-hitting reserve Robbie Grossman could spell him more frequently in 2017. Free-swinging Eddie Rosario, who endured a difficult sophomore season that included a six-week demotion to the minors and a season-ending thumb injury in September, returns in left.

2017 PREDICTION
5th
AL Central

2016 RECORD
59-103

HOME: 30-51 **ROAD:** 29-52

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

TEAM INFO

TARGET FIELD
Opened: 2010 **Capacity:** 39,504
Left: 339' **Center:** 411' **Right:** 328'
Tickets: 612-375-1366
minnesota.twins.mlb.com

FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
2B Brian Dozier

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
RHP Ervin Santana

BULL MARKET
OF Byron Buxton

BEAR MARKET
1B Joe Mauer

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
LHP Glen Perkins

IPO LHP Buddy Boshers

FUTURES MARKET SS Nick Gordon

INSIDER TIP Buxton's haplessness from his June 2015 debut through last August was just an evil confluence of being rushed, thumb and knee injuries, and crisis of confidence. He's back on the star track.

STATLINE

SENATORS/TWINS HRs PER 100 PAs

1. Harmon Killebrew	5.91
2. Miguel Sano	**5.18**
3. Roy Sievers	5.04
4. Don Mincher	4.96
5. Jimmie Hall	4.66
(min. 750 PAs)	

Source: Complete Baseball Encyclopedia

AP Images

PROJECTED LINEUP

NEXT LEVEL

LINEUP

SS	Jorge Polanco (S)
1B	**Joe Mauer (L)**
2B	Brian Dozier (R)
3B	Miguel Sano (R)
RF	Max Kepler (L)
DH	Byung Ho Park (R)
LF	Eddie Rosario (L)
C	Jason Castro (L)
CF	Byron Buxton (R)

Joe Mauer cut his swing rate from 41.0 percent to 35.8 percent. His 13.7 percent walk rate was the second best of his career, trailing only his 2012 rate when he led baseball with a .416 on-base percentage.

BENCH

UT	Eduardo Escobar (S)
OF	Robbie Grossman (S)
C	John Ryan Murphy (R)
OF	**Danny Santana (S)**

Danny Santana has a 3.9 percent walk rate through his first three seasons. Only five qualified hitters had a lower walk rate in 2016.

ROTATION

RHP	Ervin Santana
LHP	**Hector Santiago**
RHP	Kyle Gibson
RHP	Phil Hughes
RHP	Jose Berrios

Hector Santiago led the AL with a 10.1 percent walk rate, while his strikeout rate dropped from 20.9 percent to 18.3 percent.

BULLPEN

RHP	Brandon Kintzler (Closer)
LHP	Glen Perkins
RHP	Ryan Pressly
RHP	**Trevor May**
LHP	Taylor Rogers
LHP	Buddy Boshers
RHP	J.T. Chargois

As Trevor May transitioned to full-time reliever, his strikeout rate rose (22.4 to 32.1 percent), average fastball velocity rose (92.9 to 93.9 mph) and contact rate dropped (78.5 to 72.3 percent).

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE TWINS

"I think this is a sleeping giant — fairly soon, but of course not now. There's not a lot of impact in that rotation, just some stabilizers at best except for Jose Berrios, who had some growing pains last year but still has the most upside. I'm not giving up on their core of position players, either. Byron Buxton did a lot of damage in the last month, and he's a dynamic athlete with the aptitude to be a star. He'll play at 23 this year. Miguel Sano was totally miscast in the outfield last year, but he's still a high-impact guy. Max Kepler's a real good athlete who's just scratching the surface, and he makes pretty decent contact for the type of power he has. Overall this is still an extremely talented group, and they'll realign some things defensively, try to weather that weak bullpen and middling rotation and get back to the process of growing into a contender."

STATISTICIAN

0.79	ERA over the final 13 outings for rookie RHP J.T. Chargois.
23	Rank among 30 big-league clubs for Twins average home attendance (24,245). They still managed to outdraw four AL clubs, including division rivals Chicago and Cleveland.
565	Total losses for the Twins since the start of 2011. Only the Houston Astros (570) have had more during that span.
6.4	Nine-inning strikeout rate for Twins pitchers over the past six seasons, last in the majors.
.994	OPS vs. lefties for switch-hitting outfielder Robbie Grossman, 11th in MLB and seven points better than Mike Trout.
.416	Miguel Sano's batting average in 78 plate appearances against the shift, 17th best in the majors in 2016.
12	Career starts above Double-A for prospect Adalberto Mejia, who came over from the Giants in a deadline deal for Eduardo Nunez.

JOE MAUER

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3 KC	4	5 KC	6 KC	7 CWS	8 CWS
9 CWS	10	11 DET	12 DET	13 DET	14 CWS	15 CWS
16 CWS	17 CLE	18 CLE	19 CLE	20 CLE	21 DET	22 DET
23 DET	24 TEX	25 TEX	26 TEX	27	28 KC	29 KC
30 KC						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2 OAK	3 OAK	4 OAK	5 BOS	6 BOS
7 BOS	8	9 CWS	10 CWS	11 CWS	12 CLE	13 CLE
14 CLE	15	16 COL	17 COL	18 COL	19 KC	20 KC
21 KC	22 BAL	23 BAL	24 BAL	25	26 TB	27 TB
28 TB	29 HOU	30 HOU	31 HOU			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 LAA	2 LAA	3 LAA
4 LAA	5	6 SEA	7 SEA	8 SEA	9 SF	10 SF
11 SF	12 SEA	13 SEA	14 SEA	15 SEA	16 CLE	17 CLE
18 CLE	19	20 CWS	21 CWS	22 CWS	23 CLE	24 CLE
25 CLE	26 BOS	27 BOS	28 BOS	29 BOS	30 KC	

July

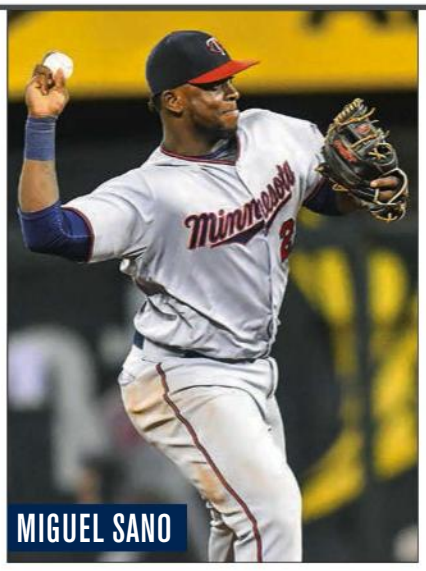
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 KC
2 KC	3 LAA	4 LAA	5 LAA	6 BAL	7 BAL	8 BAL
9 BAL	10	11	12	13	14 HOU	15 HOU
16 HOU	17 NYY	18 NYY	19 NYY	20	21 DET	22 DET
23 DET	24 LAD	25 LAD	26 LAD	27	28 OAK	29 OAK
30 OAK	31					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 SD	2 SD	3 TEX	4 TEX	5 TEX
6 TEX	7 MIL	8 MIL	9 MIL	10 MIL	11 DET	12 DET
13 DET	14	15 CLE	16 CLE	17 CLE	18 ARI	19 ARI
20 ARI	21 CWS	22 CWS	23 CWS	24 CWS	25 TOR	26 TOR
27 TOR	28	29 CWS	30 CWS	31 CWS		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 KC	2 KC
3 KC	4 TB	5 TB	6 TB	7 KC	8 KC	9 KC
10 KC	11	12 SD	13 SD	14 TOR	15 TOR	16 TOR
17 TOR	18 NYY	19 NYY	20 NYY	21 DET	22 DET	23 DET
24 DET	25	26 CLE	27 CLE	28 CLE	29 DET	30 DET
1 DET						



CATCHING Castro doesn't have to be Pudge Rodriguez in his prime to make an impact on his new club. The ability to throw out runners and frame pitches should make him a clear upgrade over predecessors Kurt Suzuki and Juan Centeno, both of whom struggled on the defensive side. Castro's lefty power (13.5-homer average over the last four seasons) should come in handy as well for a team that ranked in the bottom seven in slugging and isolated power against right-handers by lefty hitters. John Ryan Murphy's pitch framing ranked as the minors' best over the four months he spent at Rochester.

DH/BENCH Byung Ho Park's debut, which ended in August surgery on his right hand, was considered a disappointment, but he still hit 22 homers in 93 games between the majors and Triple-A Rochester. Grossman, picked up off the scrap heap in mid-May, showed the ability to pound lefties even as he had his share of woes in left field. Veteran utility man Eduardo Escobar, who failed to hold the Opening Day job at shortstop in 2016, was brought back as insurance up the middle. Speedy switch-hitter Danny Santana remains, but the bulk of his sporadic playing time now comes in the outfield.

MANAGEMENT Falvey and Levine, the latter of whom spent the previous 11 years as assistant GM for the Texas Rangers, vowed to work closely with their inherited manager — Paul Molitor, entering the final season of a three-year contract — and his staff. Just as notably, they kept nearly everyone in place in the scouting and farm departments.

FINAL ANALYSIS Saddled with the majors' second-most losses over the past six seasons, the Twins are finally joining the game's analytics revolution while maintaining a strong emphasis on traditional scouting. Their payroll figured to remain right around $100 million as they continued to break in young talent and sought new methods of procuring future weapons. The honeymoon for the new front-office duo figures to last for at least a couple of years while the Twins find their footing once more in a difficult division.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

WALK-OFF JOE When Joe Mauer delivered the game-winning single vs. Cleveland in the bottom of the 12th inning on Sept. 10, it marked just the second walk-off hit of his career. The first came July 15, 2007, with a single against the A's. Mauer, who also drew a walk-off walk on July 29 against the Chicago White Sox, has 38 career intentional walks in the ninth inning or later. His on-base percentage in extra innings is .500, which includes a .302 average in 86 at-bats.

SUITABLE FOR FRAMING In his first three big-league seasons, Jason Castro was credited with a combined minus-16.5 framing runs above average, according to Baseball Prospectus. In his final three seasons with the Houston Astros, however, Castro revamped himself into a framing machine (plus 39.5 framing runs) to the point the Twins gave him a three-year, $24.5 million contract on the open market. "It's something that over the last couple years I've tried to refine as much as possible," Castro says of framing. "There was definitely a focus on this new topic of pitch framing. I tried to get a better understanding of what works, what doesn't."

DEUTSCHLAND DOER On Aug. 1 at Cleveland, rookie right fielder Max Kepler became just the fifth player in Twins history to hit three or more homers in a single game, joining Bob Allison, Harmon Killebrew, Tony Oliva and Justin Morneau. The Berlin-born Kepler finished the year with 17 homers and already ranks fifth all-time for homers by a German-born player. Former third baseman Mike Blowers, born in Wurzburg, went deep 78 times in an 11-year big-league career that ended in 1999.

MIGGY SQUARED Thirteen years before Miguel Sano was asked to move from third base to right field, a Marlins rookie named Miguel Cabrera made a similar transition. Sano lasted just two months, contributing minus-8 defensive runs saved (74th among 81 big-league right fielders with 100-plus innings), before moving back to the infield. Cabrera, stuck behind Mike Lowell, played his first three seasons at the corner outfield, totaling minus-6 DRS in nearly 3,000 innings.

DOMINICAN DANDY Ervin Santana enters 2017 fifth all-time in victories (133) by pitchers born in the Dominican Republic. Ramon Martinez, Pedro's older brother, is two wins ahead of Santana, who passed the late Joaquin Andujar (127) and Pedro Astacio (129) during a seven-win 2016. Santana also ranks fifth in innings among his countrymen and fourth in strikeouts.

AP Images

TWINS ROSTER

General Manager: Thad Levine **Manager:** Paul Molitor **Coaches:** Neil Allen (pitching), Gene Glynn (third base), Eddie Guardado (bullpen), Rudy Hernandez (asst. hitting), Jeff Pickler, James Rowson (hitting), Jeff Smith (first base), Joe Vavra (bench)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
17	Jose Berrios	R-R	6-0	185	5/27/94	**MINNESOTA**	**3-7**	**8.02**	**14**	**14**	**0**	**58.1**	**74**	**35**	**49**
						Rochester (AAA)	10-5	2.51	17	17	0	111.1	74	36	125
62	Buddy Boshers	L-L	6-3	205	5/9/88	**MINNESOTA**	**2-0**	**4.25**	**37**	**0**	**0**	**36.0**	**35**	**7**	**37**
						Rochester (AAA)	1-1	1.04	22	0	2	26.0	18	11	29
60	J.T. Chargois	S-R	6-3	200	12/3/90	**MINNESOTA**	**1-1**	**4.70**	**25**	**0**	**0**	**23.0**	**25**	**12**	**17**
						Rochester (AAA)	2-1	1.29	28	0	9	35.0	27	8	41
						Chattanooga (AA)	0-0	1.54	11	0	7	11.2	8	5	14
56	Tyler Duffey	R-R	6-3	220	12/27/90	**MINNESOTA**	**9-12**	**6.43**	**26**	**26**	**0**	**133.0**	**167**	**32**	**114**
						Rochester (AAA)	1-1	2.93	5	5	0	30.2	24	12	25
44	Kyle Gibson	R-R	6-6	215	10/23/87	**MINNESOTA**	**6-11**	**5.07**	**25**	**25**	**0**	**147.1**	**175**	**55**	**104**
	Justin Haley	R-R	6-5	230	6/16/91	Pawtucket (AAA)	8-6	3.59	15	14	0	85.1	70	26	67
						Portland (AA)	5-4	2.20	12	12	0	61.1	49	19	59
45	Phil Hughes	R-R	6-5	240	6/24/86	**MINNESOTA**	**1-7**	**5.95**	**12**	**11**	**0**	**59.0**	**76**	**13**	**34**
	Felix Jorge	R-R	6-2	170	1/2/94	Chattanooga (AA)	3-5	4.12	11	11	0	74.1	83	12	32
						Fort Myers (A)	9-3	1.55	14	14	0	93.0	76	11	77
27	Brandon Kintzler	R-R	6-0	190	8/1/84	**MINNESOTA**	**0-2**	**3.15**	**54**	**0**	**17**	**54.1**	**59**	**8**	**35**
						Rochester (AAA)	4-1	3.52	10	0	0	15.1	15	3	11
53	Pat Light	R-R	6-5	220	3/29/91	**MINNESOTA**	**0-1**	**9.00**	**15**	**0**	**0**	**14.0**	**15**	**15**	**14**
						Rochester (AAA)	1-0	2.57	6	0	2	7.0	5	2	6
						BOSTON	**0-0**	**23.63**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**2.2**	**7**	**1**	**2**
						Pawtucket (AAA)	1-1	2.32	25	0	7	31.0	21	17	36
65	Trevor May	R-R	6-5	240	9/23/89	**MINNESOTA**	**2-2**	**5.27**	**44**	**0**	**0**	**42.2**	**39**	**17**	**60**
						Rochester (AAA)	0-1	2.45	4	0	1	3.2	1	1	6
49	Adalberto Mejia	R-L	6-3	195	6/20/93	**MINNESOTA**	**0-0**	**7.71**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**2.1**	**5**	**1**	**0**
						Rochester (AAA)	2-2	3.76	4	4	0	26.1	28	3	25
						Sacramento (AAA)	4-1	4.20	7	7	0	40.2	42	11	43
						Richmond (AA)	3-2	1.94	11	11	0	65.0	48	16	58
74	Mason Melotakis	R-L	6-2	220	6/28/91	Chattanooga (AA)	1-2	2.97	36	0	0	33.1	36	12	42
61	Ryan O'Rourke	R-L	6-3	230	4/30/88	**MINNESOTA**	**0-1**	**3.96**	**26**	**0**	**0**	**25.0**	**18**	**10**	**24**
						Rochester (AAA)	1-1	1.93	33	0	1	28.0	26	6	29
15	Glen Perkins	L-L	6-0	205	3/2/83	**MINNESOTA**	**0-0**	**9.00**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**2.0**	**5**	**1**	**3**
57	Ryan Pressly	R-R	6-3	210	12/15/88	**MINNESOTA**	**6-7**	**3.70**	**72**	**0**	**1**	**75.1**	**79**	**23**	**67**
55	Taylor Rogers	L-L	6-3	170	12/17/90	**MINNESOTA**	**3-1**	**3.96**	**57**	**0**	**0**	**61.1**	**63**	**16**	**64**
						Rochester (AAA)	0-1	4.50	7	2	0	18.0	24	6	15
	Fernando Romero	R-R	6-0	215	12/24/94	Fort Myers (A)	5-2	1.88	11	11	0	62.1	48	10	65
						Cedar Rapids (A)	4-1	1.93	5	5	0	28.0	18	5	25
76	Randy Rosario	L-L	6-1	200	5/18/94	Chattanooga (AA)	0-1	10.50	4	0	0	6.0	6	5	10
						Fort Myers (A)	6-6	3.34	21	16	1	94.1	102	34	68
54	Ervin Santana	R-R	6-2	175	12/12/82	**MINNESOTA**	**7-11**	**3.38**	**30**	**30**	**0**	**181.1**	**168**	**53**	**149**
66	Hector Santiago	R-L	6-0	215	12/16/87	**MINNESOTA**	**3-6**	**5.58**	**11**	**11**	**0**	**61.1**	**65**	**22**	**37**
						LOS ANGELES AL	**10-4**	**4.25**	**22**	**22**	**0**	**120.2**	**104**	**57**	**107**
59	Michael Tonkin	R-R	6-7	220	11/19/89	**MINNESOTA**	**3-2**	**5.02**	**65**	**0**	**0**	**71.2**	**80**	**24**	**80**

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	Jason Castro	L-R	6-3	215	6/18/87	**HOUSTON**	**.210**	**113**	**329**	**41**	**69**	**11**	**32**	**45**	**123**	**2**
	Mitch Garver	R-R	6-1	220	1/15/91	Rochester (AAA)	.329	22	76	6	25	1	8	7	21	0
						Chattanooga (AA)	.257	95	358	44	92	11	66	43	86	1
12	John Ryan Murphy	R-R	5-11	205	5/13/91	**MINNESOTA**	**.146**	**26**	**82**	**4**	**12**	**1**	**3**	**5**	**19**	**0**
						Rochester (AAA)	.236	83	263	24	62	3	39	21	51	0

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
2	Brian Dozier	R-R	5-11	200	5/15/87	**MINNESOTA**	**.268**	**155**	**615**	**104**	**165**	**42**	**99**	**61**	**138**	**18**
5	Eduardo Escobar	S-R	5-10	185	1/5/89	**MINNESOTA**	**.236**	**105**	**352**	**32**	**83**	**6**	**37**	**21**	**72**	**1**
7	Joe Mauer	L-R	6-5	225	4/19/83	**MINNESOTA**	**.261**	**134**	**494**	**68**	**129**	**11**	**49**	**79**	**93**	**2**
52	Byung Ho Park	R-R	6-1	220	7/10/86	**MINNESOTA**	**.191**	**62**	**215**	**28**	**41**	**12**	**24**	**21**	**80**	**1**
						Rochester (AAA)	.224	31	116	18	26	10	19	6	32	0
11	Jorge Polanco	S-R	5-11	200	7/5/93	**MINNESOTA**	**.282**	**69**	**245**	**24**	**69**	**4**	**27**	**17**	**46**	**4**
						Rochester (AAA)	.276	75	293	32	81	9	39	27	51	5
22	Miguel Sano	R-R	6-4	260	5/11/93	**MINNESOTA**	**.236**	**116**	**437**	**57**	**103**	**25**	**66**	**54**	**178**	**1**
						Rochester (AAA)	.160	8	25	3	4	2	2	5	10	0
19	Kennys Vargas	S-R	6-5	290	8/1/90	**MINNESOTA**	**.230**	**47**	**152**	**27**	**35**	**10**	**20**	**24**	**57**	**0**
						Rochester (AAA)	.233	96	330	41	77	15	58	66	89	1
	Engelb Vielma	S-R	5-11	155	6/22/94	Chattanooga (AA)	.271	90	314	47	85	0	21	34	62	10
						Fort Myers (A	.200	8	25	5	5	0	0	5	8	2

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
25	Byron Buxton	R-R	6-2	190	12/18/93	**MINNESOTA**	**.225**	**92**	**298**	**44**	**67**	**10**	**38**	**23**	**118**	**10**
						Rochester (AAA)	.305	49	190	41	58	11	24	14	58	7
	Zach Granite	L-L	6-1	175	9/17/92	Chattanooga (AA)	.295	127	526	86	155	4	52	42	43	56
36	Robbie Grossman	S-L	6-0	215	9/16/89	**MINNESOTA**	**.280**	**99**	**332**	**49**	**93**	**11**	**37**	**55**	**96**	**2**
						Colo. Sprs. (AAA)	.256	34	117	14	30	6	13	21	25	3
26	Max Kepler	L-L	6-4	205	2/10/93	**MINNESOTA**	**.235**	**113**	**396**	**52**	**93**	**17**	**63**	**42**	**93**	**6**
						Rochester (AAA)	.282	30	110	16	31	1	19	16	14	1
	Daniel Palka	L-L	6-2	220	10/28/91	Rochester (AAA)	.232	54	203	31	47	13	25	18	86	2
						Chattanooga (AA)	.270	79	300	42	81	21	65	38	100	7
20	Eddie Rosario	L-R	6-1	180	9/28/91	**MINNESOTA**	**.269**	**92**	**335**	**52**	**90**	**10**	**32**	**12**	**91**	**5**
						Rochester (AAA)	.319	41	160	26	51	7	25	7	25	5
39	Danny Santana	S-R	5-11	185	11/7/90	**MINNESOTA**	**.240**	**75**	**233**	**29**	**56**	**2**	**14**	**12**	**55**	**12**
						Rochester (AAA)	.364	3	11	3	4	0	0	0	2	1
						Fort Myers (A)	.200	3	10	2	2	1	1	0	2	1

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

ALEX KIRILLOFF, OF

Taken 15th overall out of high school, Kirilloff received a $2.82 million signing bonus for his smooth left-handed swing, advanced plate discipline and corner-outfield ability. Coached by his father, David, for much of his youth, Kirilloff was signed away from a commitment to Liberty University. Twins scouts see a lot of Max Kepler in Kirilloff's game, while other comps include Marlins outfielder Christian Yelich and former Rockies slugger Todd Helton. A baseball prodigy from an early age, Kirilloff was playing travel ball with 12-year olds when he was 8 and made his high school varsity team as a ninth-grader. After hitting .306 in 216 at-bats for rookie-level Elizabethton, Kirilloff missed the final eight days of the Appalachian League season with mild inflammation in his throwing elbow. He figures to open 2016 at Low-A Cedar Rapids in the Midwest League.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Nick Gordon, SS (21) The son of former big-league closer Tom Gordon and younger brother of Miami Marlins second baseman Dee Gordon handled himself well in his first crack at the Arizona Fall League.

2. Tyler Jay, LHP (22) A 2015 first-rounder, Jay has a wipeout slider and could reach the majors quickly in a bullpen role.

3. Alex Kirilloff, OF (19) His smooth left-handed swing should enable him to move steadily through a well-stocked system.

4. Stephen Gonsalves, LHP (22) Former fourth-round value pick remains on track after being named Twins Minor League Pitcher of the Year.

5. Fernando Romero, RHP (22) Fully recovered from 2014 Tommy John surgery, the undersized Dominican reaches triple digits with his fastball.

6. Kohl Stewart, RHP (22) His power sinker has helped him reach Double-A, but the former Texas A&M quarterback commit still doesn't miss enough bats.

7. Adalberto Mejia, LHP (23) Acquired from the Giants in the Eduardo Nunez trade; needs to watch his weight and polish his command.

8. Wander Javier, SS (18) Five-tool talent was shut down after experiencing nagging hamstring issues in his first pro action in the Dominican Summer League.

9. J.T. Chargois, RHP (26) His triple-digit fastball, sweeping slider and plus changeup give him back-end bullpen potential.

10. Nick Burdi, RHP (24) An injury limited this potential closer to three innings at Double-A last season, but the 100-mph fastball and power slider remain intact.

HOUSTON ASTROS

On the morning of June 30, 2014, the Astros were in last place with a 36–47 record en route to a 70–92 finish that, while unimpressive, broke a string of three straight 100-loss seasons. The *Sports Illustrated* cover dated June 30, 2014, featured Astros rookie George Springer and the caption, "Your 2017 World Series Champs." After somewhat surprisingly making the playoffs in 2015 and somewhat surprisingly missing them in 2016, Astros management dominated the pre-Thanksgiving news cycle, adding three veterans to a team that had one of the lowest payrolls in baseball, was the youngest in the majors on offense, and featured four key pitchers 25 or younger. With one of the league's better offenses, a strong bullpen, and (fingers crossed) a return to health/effectiveness in the starting rotation, the Astros appear poised to improve on last year's 84–78 record, return to the postseason and try to deliver on *Sports Illustrated's* prophecy.

ROTATION The starting rotation was the team's weakness last year, as the starters' ERA ballooned from 3.71 in 2015, second best in the league, to 4.37. The biggest drop-off was that of Dallas Keuchel, who went from 20–8, 2.48 in his 2015 Cy Young season to 9–12, 4.55. But he wasn't alone; rotation mates Collin McHugh and Mike Fiers slipped as well, and while Lance McCullers posted the same 3.22 ERA in 2016 as he did in 2015, injuries limited him to 14 starts. All four are back, though both Keuchel (shoulder) and McCullers (elbow) are on the mend. Assuming they and free-agent pickup Charlie "Ground Chuck" Morton, a groundball machine who was limited to four starts last year due to a torn hamstring, are healthy, Fiers will compete with Joseph Musgrove for the fifth spot in the rotation.

BULLPEN The overall numbers for the Astros' bullpen don't jump out at you. Houston tied with the Twins for the sixth-most blown saves in the league, and its 3.56 ERA, while good, was only sixth best. But that doesn't tell the full story. The Astros bullpen was 0–4 in April with a 4.75 ERA (worst in the AL) and had six blown saves (second most in the league) in May. After June 4, when Luke Gregerson blew his fifth save and became the setup man, the relief corps came together. In the season's second half, the Astros led all American League bullpens in strikeout percentage, strikeout-to-walk ratio and holds. They had the third fewest blown saves and the fourth lowest batting average allowed. Ken Giles became a dominant closer, Gregerson remained a strong setup man, and middle relievers Will Harris, Michael Feliz and James Hoyt averaged over a strikeout per inning (Chris Devenski and Tony Sipp fell just short of the mark). Those seven combined for a 3.34 ERA and struck out 29.7 percent of the batters they faced (the average for AL relievers was 3.84 and 22.8 percent).

MIDDLE INFIELD Last year, Carlos Correa was a 21-year-old shortstop who batted third and fourth, hit 20 homers and drove in 96 while batting .274/.361/.451 — and his season was viewed as a disappointment by some, as his home run and stolen base numbers declined from his 99-game rookie season in 2015. Second baseman Jose Altuve led the league in hits and batting average and was third in the MVP vote. They're the core of the team and form, easily, the best middle infield tandem in the game (sorry, Cubs, Red Sox, and Indians fans; it's true).

CORNERS The Astros signed 32-year-old Cuban infielder Yulieski Gurriel in mid-July for $47.5 million, and after 15 games with four minor-league teams, he joined the Astros in August. After batting .338/.360/.521 in his first 21 games, he hit only .169/.210/.220 in his last 15. He's penciled in as the starting first baseman, where he started only four games last year. Another midseason call-up, 2015 draft first-round pick Alex Bregman, 10 years Gurriel's junior, will play third. Flipping Gurriel's performance, Bregman started his major-league career 1-for-34 but hit .311/.359/.569 after that, taking over the No. 2 spot in the lineup.

OUTFIELD The free-agent signing of Josh Reddick (four years, $52 million) on the heels of adding Nori Aoki on waivers creates a surplus. Springer is a fixture in the leadoff spot, thanks to his .359 on base percentage (19th in the AL) and plus fielding in right. Reddick, also a strong fielder, will probably slide over to left. The Astros have another skilled defender, Jake Marisnick, in center, but he's a lifetime .225/.268/.339 hitter. Aoki, a left fielder selected from the Mariners, is an on-base machine (OBP between .349 and .356 in each of his five major-league seasons), and he'll see playing time as well, moving Reddick to right and Springer to center.

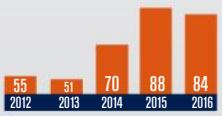
CATCHING The team traded two hard-throwing minor-league pitchers to the Yankees for backstop Brian McCann and cash. He replaces the departed Jason Castro. The Astros will pay McCann $23 million of the $34 million he's owed through 2018. He's hit 20 or more homers in nine straight seasons; no Astros catcher has ever hit that

2017 PREDICTION
1st
AL West

2016 RECORD
84-78

HOME: 43-38 **ROAD:** 41-40

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND



TEAM INFO

MINUTE MAID PARK
Opened: 2000 **Capacity:** 40,981
Left: 315' **Center:** 409' **Right:** 326'
Tickets: 713-259-8000
houston.astros.mlb.com

➤ FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
2B Jose Altuve

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
RHP Dallas Keuchel

BULL MARKET
3B Alex Bregman

BEAR MARKET
DH/C Evan Gattis

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
RHP Lance McCullers

IPO OF Teoscar Hernandez

FUTURES MARKET OF Kyle Tucker

INSIDER TIP They won't arrive in West Palm Beach with guaranteed slots in the rotation, but Joe Musgrove and Chris Devenski are promising draft "cheapies" who will pay off come summer.

➤ STATLINE

FIELDING INDEPENDENT PITCHING (FIP): 2016 AL

1. Chris Devenski, Astros	**2.34**
2. James Paxton, Mariners	2.80
3. Yu Darvish, Rangers	3.09
4. Corey Kluber, Indians	3.26
5. Rick Porcello, Red Sox	3.40

(min. 100 IP)

Tom DiPace

➤ PROJECTED LINEUP

NEXT LEVEL

LINEUP

RF	**George Springer (R)**
3B	Alex Bregman (R)
2B	Jose Altuve (R)
SS	Carlos Correa (R)
DH	Carlos Beltran (S)
LF	Josh Reddick (L)
C	Brian McCann (L)
1B	Yulieski Gurriel (R)
CF	Jake Marisnick (R)

BENCH

C	Evan Gattis (R)
OF	Nori Aoki (L)
UT	**Marwin Gonzalez (S)**
1B	A.J. Reed (L)

ROTATION

LHP	**Dallas Keuchel**
RHP	Collin McHugh
RHP	Lance McCullers
RHP	Charlie Morton
RHP	Mike Fiers

BULLPEN

RHP	Ken Giles (Closer)
RHP	**Luke Gregerson**
RHP	Will Harris
RHP	Chris Devenski
RHP	Michael Feliz
LHP	Tony Sipp
RHP	James Hoyt

George Springer took a step forward last season with his contact rate up 4.4 points to 73.9 percent. That helped lower his strikeout rate to 23.9 percent after holding a 28.0 percent strikeout rate his first two seasons.

Marwin Gonzalez's strikeout rate has risen in each of his five seasons. He posted a career-high 22.8 percent rate last season.

Dallas Keuchel's ERA rose two-plus runs. His strikeout rate dropped (23.7 to 20.5 percent), walk rate rose (5.6 to 6.9 percent), home run rate rose (1.9 to 2.9 percent), and hard contact rate rose (21.3 to 29.8 percent).

Luke Gregerson gave up contact on only 58.0 percent of opponents' swings. He was the only reliever to have a contact rate below 60 percent.

➤ SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE ASTROS

"They're a lot more balanced after acquiring some left-handed hitters. Josh Reddick and Brian McCann will help defensively, too, and Carlos Beltran can't hurt you too much playing defense in that small left field in Houston. They'll get a full year from Yulieski Gurriel and Alex Bregman, who can both really hit, but I'd like to see that team use speed more. The bullpen is really strong, but the biggest key to their team is Lance McCullers, because the rotation is still a big question. He has top-of-the-rotation stuff, far better than anybody else on the staff, including Dallas Keuchel. They gave a lot of money to Charlie Morton, and he can be an asset if he can make 25 starts. Chris Devenski was probably the best long reliever in baseball last year, and I'd like to see him get a shot at the rotation as an aggressive control pitcher who throws strikes with all his pitches."

➤ STATISTICIAN

3	Jose Altuve's finish in the MVP voting, the best showing for an Astro since Lance Berkman finished third in 2006.
12	Astros' rank in the American League in win-loss record when trailing after seven (6–67) and eight (2–70) innings. To return to the postseason, the team needs to generate some comebacks.
4	Astros starting pitchers who qualified for the ERA title (162 innings). Only two teams topped that — Blue Jays and Cubs with five each.
14	Rank of Astros first basemen, left fielders and center fielders in park-adjusted OPS among the 15 American League teams. For good measure, Houston DHs ranked last. Expect improvement in 2017.
.194	Josh Reddick's career batting average in 110 plate appearances in Minute Maid Park.

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3 SEA	4 SEA	5 SEA	6 SEA	7 KC	8 KC
9 KC	10 SEA	11 SEA	12 SEA	13	14 OAK	15 OAK
16 OAK	17 LAA	18 LAA	19 LAA	20 LAA	21 TB	22 TB
23 TB	24	25 CLE	26 CLE	27 CLE	28 OAK	29 OAK
30 OAK						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 TEX	2 TEX	3 TEX	4 TEX	5 LAA	6 LAA
7 LAA	8	9 ATL	10 ATL	11 NYY	12 NYY	13 NYY
14 NYY	15 MIA	16 MIA	17 MIA	18	19 CLE	20 CLE
21 CLE	22 DET	23 DET	24 DET	25 DET	26 BAL	27 BAL
28 BAL	29 MIN	30 MIN	31 MIN			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2 TEX	3 TEX
4 TEX	5 KC	6 KC	7 KC	8 KC	9 LAA	10 LAA
11 LAA	12 TEX	13 TEX	14 TEX	15	16 BOS	17 BOS
18 BOS	19 OAK	20 OAK	21 OAK	22 OAK	23 SEA	24 SEA
25 SEA	26	27 OAK	28 OAK	29 OAK	30 NYY	

July

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 NYY
2 NYY	3	4 ATL	5 ATL	6 TOR	7 TOR	8 TOR
9 TOR	10	11	12	13	14 MIN	15 MIN
16 MIN	17 SEA	18 SEA	19 SEA	20	21 BAL	22 BAL
23 BAL	24 PHI	25 PHI	26 PHI	27	28 DET	29 DET
30 DET	31 TB					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 TB	2 TB	3 TB	4 TOR	5 TOR
6 TOR	7	8 CWS	9 CWS	10 CWS	11 TEX	12 TEX
13 TEX	14 ARI	15 ARI	16 ARI	17 ARI	18 OAK	19 OAK
20 OAK	21	22 WAS	23 WAS	24 WAS	25 LAA	26 LAA
27 LAA	28	29 TEX	30 TEX	31 TEX		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 NYM	2 NYM
3 NYM	4 SEA	5 SEA	6 SEA	7	8 OAK	9 OAK
10 OAK	11	12 LAA	13 LAA	14 LAA	15 SEA	16 SEA
17 SEA	18	19 CWS	20 CWS	21 CWS	22 LAA	23 LAA
24 LAA	25 TEX	26 TEX	27 TEX	28 BOS	29 BOS	30 BOS
1 BOS						

JOSE ALTUVE

many in a single season. Designated hitter Evan Gattis provides the Astros the luxury of not having to carry a spare catcher on their roster.

DH/BENCH Signing Carlos Beltran to a one-year, $16 million contract pushes Gattis into a reserve role. Backing up a soon-to-be 40-year-old designated hitter (who was 17th in the AL in OPS in 2016) and a 33-year-old catcher should give Gattis, who had a career high in homers (32) and slugging (.508) in 2016, ample playing opportunities. Marwin Gonzalez returns to his utility role; he played every non-battery position but right field last year and will likely be Beltran's legs in late innings. Aoki and Marisnick will be bats off the bench (and, in Marisnick's case, a defensive replacement) when the other's playing. First baseman A.J. Reed, who hit 35 homers in the minors in 2015 but was unimpressive in 45 games in Houston last year, could be a left-handed power option at first and DH.

MANAGEMENT A.J. Hinch doesn't stand out tactically. He's reluctant to let starting pitchers go deep into games, and he rarely calls for an intentional walk, but he's middle-of-the-pack on most strategies. Where he stands out is his willingness to trust young players, resulting in the emergence of Altuve, Correa, Springer and Bregman as young stars. As he enters his third season, that characteristic has made him the longest-tenured Astros manager under GM Jeff Luhnow.

FINAL ANALYSIS A rebound seems plausible. The team finished five games out of the Wild Card, but they didn't have Bregman, Gurriel, Reddick, McCann, or a settled bullpen when they began the 2016 season. The Rangers were a record-setting 36–11 in one-run games, an indicator more of luck than skill, so some regression is to be expected, and the Mariners have become one of the league's oldest teams. Given Houston's depth on the field and in the bullpen, a modestly better performance by the rotation could propel the Astros back to October baseball and on the path toward *Sports Illustrated's* prediction.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

THE END OF TAL'S HILL After the season ended, the earth movers rolled into Minute Maid Park and flattened Tal's Hill. The idiosyncratic slope in center field with a flagpole in the middle is no more. The removal of the topographical oddity and the resulting shorter distance to straightaway center should result in the ballpark, which was one of the most pitcher-friendly in baseball last year, becoming more favorable for hitters. That's good news for Astros batters, who scored 40 percent of their runs on homers last year (seventh most in the league), but not for Astros pitchers, who allowed the second-fewest home runs in the AL (181).

LONE STAR STATE STRUGGLES The Astros were 4–15 against the Rangers last year and 6–13 in 2015. Their two-year 10–28 record is the second-worst intra-divisional record in baseball, with 13 of those losses by one run. The road to the American League West pennant travels through Arlington.

PLAYING TO THE MARKET Per the 2015 Census Bureau estimate, the Houston metropolitan statistical area is the fifth largest in the U.S. The Astros' 2016 payroll ranked below not only the seven teams playing in larger cities but also 13 other teams. This is partly a reflection of the team's blow-it-up rebuilding effort and partly due to lack of revenue from a local TV deal a few years ago, but Houston is now in a position to add payroll without creating a financial strain relative to its market size.

HACKING FOR DOLLARS The Commissioner's Office has not yet determined the penalty, if any, to be assessed on the Cardinals for hacking the Astros' scouting database in 2013 and 2014. While it appears likely that the Cardinals will be fined and/or lose draft picks, it's a stretch to see the Astros receiving any compensation.

REVENGE OF THE NERDS Last year's World Series opponents, the Cubs and Indians, are two of the most analytically driven teams in baseball. The Astros under GM Jeff Luhnow have been a model or a punchline, depending on your perspective, for data-driven analysis.

POSTSEASON NOSTALGIA The return of Carlos Beltran to Houston brought back memories of his 2004 postseason with the Astros, when he batted .435/.536/1.022 in 12 games, with eight homers and 14 RBIs. Should the Astros make the postseason, he'll have an opportunity to build on the one of the all-time best October résumés, including 16 homers, the ninth most in history, and a .323/.432/.646 batting line.

Tom DiPace

ASTROS ROSTER

General Manager: Jeff Luhnow **Manager:** A.J. Hinch **Coaches:** Craig Bjornson (bullpen), Alex Cora (bench), Rich Dauer (first base), Dave Hudgens (hitting), Gary Pettis (third base), Alonzo Powell (asst. hitting), Brent Strom (pitching)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
50	Kevin Chapman	L-L	6-3	230	2/19/88	**HOUSTON**	**0-0**	**9.00**	**9**	**0**	**0**	**8.0**	**15**	**4**	**6**
						Fresno (AAA)	3-4	4.87	51	0	0	61.0	68	27	76
47	Chris Devenski	R-R	6-3	210	11/13/90	**HOUSTON**	**4-4**	**2.16**	**48**	**5**	**1**	**108.1**	**79**	**20**	**104**
45	Michael Feliz	R-R	6-4	230	6/28/93	**HOUSTON**	**8-1**	**4.43**	**47**	**0**	**0**	**65.0**	**55**	**22**	**95**
						Fresno (AAA)	1-0	9.72	2	2	0	8.1	8	7	7
54	Mike Fiers	R-R	6-2	200	6/15/85	**HOUSTON**	**11-8**	**4.48**	**31**	**30**	**0**	**168.2**	**187**	**42**	**134**
53	Ken Giles	R-R	6-2	205	9/20/90	**HOUSTON**	**2-5**	**4.11**	**69**	**0**	**15**	**65.2**	**60**	**25**	**102**
44	Luke Gregerson	L-R	6-3	205	5/14/84	**HOUSTON**	**4-3**	**3.28**	**59**	**0**	**15**	**57.2**	**38**	**18**	**67**
	Reymin Guduan	L-L	6-4	205	3/16/92	Fresno (AAA)	2-3	5.23	34	0	0	43.0	43	34	44
						Corpus Christi (AA)	1-0	0.69	9	0	2	13.0	7	3	19
61	Jandel Gustave	R-R	6-2	210	10/12/92	**HOUSTON**	**1-0**	**3.52**	**14**	**0**	**0**	**15.1**	**13**	**4**	**16**
						Fresno (AAA)	3-3	3.79	47	0	3	57.0	46	23	55
36	Will Harris	R-R	6-4	250	8/28/84	**HOUSTON**	**1-2**	**2.25**	**66**	**0**	**12**	**64.0**	**52**	**15**	**69**
51	James Hoyt	R-R	6-6	230	9/30/86	**HOUSTON**	**1-1**	**4.50**	**22**	**0**	**0**	**22.0**	**16**	**9**	**28**
						Fresno (AAA)	4-3	1.64	49	0	29	55.0	29	19	93
60	Dallas Keuchel	L-L	6-3	205	1/1/88	**HOUSTON**	**9-12**	**4.55**	**26**	**26**	**0**	**168.0**	**168**	**48**	**144**
43	Lance McCullers	L-R	6-1	205	10/2/93	**HOUSTON**	**6-5**	**3.22**	**14**	**14**	**0**	**81.0**	**80**	**45**	**106**
31	Collin McHugh	R-R	6-2	190	6/19/87	**HOUSTON**	**13-10**	**4.34**	**33**	**33**	**0**	**184.2**	**206**	**54**	**177**
	Charlie Morton	R-R	6-5	235	11/12/83	**PHILADELPHIA**	**1-1**	**4.15**	**4**	**4**	**0**	**17.1**	**15**	**8**	**19**
59	Joe Musgrove	R-R	6-5	265	12/4/92	**HOUSTON**	**4-4**	**4.06**	**11**	**10**	**0**	**62.0**	**59**	**16**	**55**
						Fresno (AAA)	5-3	3.81	10	10	0	59.0	60	7	57
						Corpus Christi (AA)	2-1	0.34	6	4	0	26.1	19	3	30
63	David Paulino	R-R	6-7	215	2/6/94	**HOUSTON**	**0-1**	**5.14**	**3**	**1**	**0**	**7.0**	**6**	**3**	**2**
						Fresno (AAA)	0-2	3.86	3	3	0	14.0	16	6	20
						Corpus Christi (AA)	5-2	1.83	14	9	1	64.0	47	11	72
						GCL Astros (R)	0-0	0.75	3	3	0	12.0	9	2	14
41	Brad Peacock	R-R	6-1	210	2/2/88	**HOUSTON**	**0-1**	**3.69**	**10**	**5**	**0**	**31.2**	**21**	**14**	**28**
						Fresno (AAA)	5-6	4.23	22	21	0	117.0	122	40	119
62	Brady Rodgers	R-R	6-2	210	9/17/90	**HOUSTON**	**0-1**	**15.12**	**5**	**1**	**0**	**8.1**	**15**	**7**	**3**
						Fresno (AAA)	12-4	2.86	22	22	0	132.0	129	23	116
29	Tony Sipp	L-L	6-0	190	7/12/83	**HOUSTON**	**1-2**	**4.95**	**60**	**0**	**1**	**43.2**	**52**	**18**	**40**
	Ashur Tolliver	L-L	6-0	170	1/24/88	**BALTIMORE**	**1-0**	**5.79**	**5**	**0**	**0**	**4.2**	**5**	**3**	**5**
						Norfolk (AAA)	0-0	1.42	11	0	0	12.2	11	6	16
						Bowie (AA)	1-1	2.42	18	0	2	26.0	22	8	25
						Aberdeen (A)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	3.0	2	0	5

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
11	Evan Gattis	R-R	6-4	270	8/18/86	**HOUSTON**	**.251**	**128**	**447**	**58**	**112**	**32**	**72**	**43**	**127**	**2**
						Corpus Christi (AA)	.375	11	40	8	15	5	10	1	4	0
	Brian McCann	L-R	6-3	225	2/20/84	**NEW YORK AL**	**.242**	**130**	**429**	**56**	**104**	**20**	**58**	**54**	**99**	**1**
12	Max Stassi	R-R	5-10	200	3/15/91	**HOUSTON**	**.077**	**9**	**13**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**5**	**0**
						Fresno (AAA)	.230	69	243	21	56	7	32	20	65	1

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
27	Jose Altuve	R-R	5-6	165	5/6/90	**HOUSTON**	**.338**	**161**	**640**	**108**	**216**	**24**	**96**	**60**	**70**	**30**
2	Alex Bregman	R-R	6-0	180	3/30/94	**HOUSTON**	**.264**	**49**	**201**	**31**	**53**	**8**	**34**	**15**	**52**	**2**
						Fresno (AAA)	.333	18	78	17	26	6	15	5	12	2
						Corpus Christi (AA)	.297	62	236	54	70	14	46	42	26	5
1	Carlos Correa	R-R	6-4	215	9/22/94	**HOUSTON**	**.274**	**153**	**577**	**76**	**158**	**20**	**96**	**75**	**139**	**13**
9	Marwin Gonzalez	S-R	6-1	205	3/14/89	**HOUSTON**	**.254**	**141**	**484**	**55**	**123**	**13**	**51**	**22**	**118**	**12**
10	Yulieski Gurriel	R-R	6-0	190	6/9/84	**HOUSTON**	**.262**	**36**	**130**	**13**	**34**	**3**	**15**	**5**	**12**	**1**
						Fresno (AAA)	.222	4	18	3	4	1	2	1	4	0
						Corpus Christi (AA)	.118	5	17	0	2	0	3	1	6	0
						Lancaster (A)	.429	4	14	2	6	1	9	0	3	0
19	Colin Moran	L-R	6-4	204	10/1/92	**HOUSTON**	**.130**	**9**	**23**	**1**	**3**	**0**	**2**	**1**	**8**	**0**
						Fresno (AAA)	.259	117	459	50	119	10	69	47	124	3
23	A.J. Reed	L-L	6-4	275	5/10/93	**HOUSTON**	**.164**	**45**	**122**	**11**	**20**	**3**	**8**	**18**	**48**	**0**
						Fresno (AAA)	.291	70	261	42	76	15	50	32	67	0
13	Tyler White	R-R	5-11	225	10/29/90	**HOUSTON**	**.217**	**85**	**249**	**24**	**54**	**8**	**28**	**23**	**65**	**1**
						Fresno (AAA)	.241	44	174	28	42	13	29	16	30	1

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	Norichika Aoki	L-R	5-9	180	1/5/82	**SEATTLE**	**.283**	**118**	**417**	**63**	**118**	**4**	**28**	**34**	**45**	**7**
						Tacoma (AAA)	.323	24	96	17	31	1	7	8	13	4
77	Andrew Aplin	L-L	6-0	205	3/21/91	Fresno (AAA)	.223	116	399	61	89	5	32	42	98	21
	Carlos Beltran	S-R	6-1	215	4/24/77	**NEW YORK AL**	**.304**	**99**	**359**	**50**	**109**	**22**	**64**	**22**	**70**	**0**
						TEXAS	**.280**	**52**	**193**	**23**	**54**	**7**	**29**	**13**	**31**	**1**
35	Teoscar Hernandez	R-R	6-2	180	10/15/92	**HOUSTON**	**.230**	**41**	**100**	**15**	**23**	**4**	**11**	**11**	**28**	**0**
						Fresno (AAA)	.313	38	144	20	45	4	23	13	25	5
						Corpus Christi (AA)	.305	69	279	53	85	6	30	32	55	29
16	Tony Kemp	L-R	5-6	165	10/31/91	**HOUSTON**	**.217**	**59**	**120**	**15**	**26**	**1**	**7**	**14**	**27**	**2**
						Fresno (AAA)	.306	69	255	36	78	2	24	34	34	10
6	Jake Marisnick	R-R	6-4	220	3/30/91	**HOUSTON**	**.209**	**118**	**287**	**40**	**60**	**5**	**21**	**16**	**83**	**10**
						Fresno (AAA)	.185	7	27	3	5	0	1	1	10	1
	Josh Reddick	L-R	6-2	195	2/19/87	**OAKLAND**	**.296**	**68**	**243**	**33**	**72**	**8**	**28**	**28**	**34**	**5**
						Nashville (AAA)	.120	6	25	2	3	1	1	1	6	0
						LOS ANGELES NL	**.258**	**47**	**155**	**20**	**40**	**2**	**9**	**11**	**22**	**3**
4	George Springer	R-R	6-3	215	9/19/89	**HOUSTON**	**.261**	**162**	**644**	**116**	**168**	**29**	**82**	**88**	**178**	**9**
20	Preston Tucker	L-L	6-0	215	7/6/90	**HOUSTON**	**.164**	**48**	**134**	**11**	**22**	**4**	**8**	**8**	**40**	**0**
						Fresno (AAA)	.301	53	209	35	63	8	29	15	49	1
						Corpus Christi (AA)	.095	6	21	1	2	0	3	2	9	0

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

FORREST WHITLEY, RHP

The Astros selected Whitley as the 17th pick in last summer's amateur draft. (He was literally on the mound, pitching in the Texas Class 5A semifinals, when he was drafted.) Only 19, he stands 6'7" and turned down a commitment to Florida State to sign with Houston. He put up PlayStation numbers Alamo Heights (Texas) High School (10–1, 0.28 ERA, 137 strikeouts in 74.2 innings as a senior), and in eight rookie ball appearances last year, he struck out 26 in 18.2 innings. He has four pitches, headlined by a fastball that sits 92-94 mph and touches 96-97 mph. He also throws a curve, slider and changeup that draw mixed reviews. Hard-throwing right-handed high school pitchers from Texas inevitably draw parallels to a certain Mr. Ryan, but Whitley must develop his secondary pitches before appearing at Minute Maid Park, possibly in 2018, more likely in 2019.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Francis Martes, RHP (21) Martes was 9–6 with a 3.30 ERA at Class AA. With an already above-average fastball and curve and a developing changeup, he has top-of-the-rotation potential.

2. Kyle Tucker, OF (20) The fifth overall pick in the 2015, Tucker displayed bat skills (.285/.360/.438), speed (32 SBs), and an arm for right in his first full pro season.

3. David Paulino, RHP (23) He had 90 IP at three minor-league levels in 2016 with a 2.00 ERA, 10.6 K/9, and 5.6 K/BB. His 6'7" frame generates a power fastball and curve.

4. Franklin Perez, RHP (19) He's allowed only two home runs in 116.2 professional innings and notched 136 strikeouts with his 91-93 mph fastball (touches 95), good curve and developing changeup.

5. Derek Fisher, OF (23) With two 20-homer years in the minors and a .290/.347/.505 line at AAA Fresno, he should see time in left field in Houston.

6. Forrest Whitley, RHP (19) The Astros' top pick in 2016 is likely two-to-three years away.

7. Daz Cameron, OF (20) He struggled (.212/.287/.321) in his second pro season, but Mike Cameron's son projects to have the bat, glove and speed to be a successful center fielder.

8. Yulieski Gurriel, 1B/3B (32) Astros hope for a return of the power that yielded a homer every 19 at-bats in 15 seasons in Cuba.

9. Teoscar Hernandez, OF (24) He displayed a majors-ready glove in 41 big-league games last year and has 20/20 upside.

10. Miguelangel Sierra, 2B/SS (19) The Venezuelan showed strong range, good hands, and flashes of power in 2016.

LOS ANGELES ANGELS

The state of the Angels is evident in the popularity of a debate that should be unthinkable: Would they be better off trading Mike Trout to jumpstart a rebuilding effort?

Already a two-time MVP and just 25 years old, Trout is the best player in baseball, a generational talent just dipping into the heart of a likely Hall of Fame career. But the talent around Trout is pedestrian and the roster thin. A series of costly decisions on the free-agent market has left the Angels with the weakest farm system in baseball, $20 million in obligations still to pay for the ill-advised Josh Hamilton dalliance and a potential millstone in the aging Albert Pujols, who had foot surgery again in the offseason and, at age 37, is still owed $140 million over the next five years.

The Angels did take baby steps in GM Billy Eppler's first year to address the organizational shortcomings. There is hope for the future, but it's hard to see the light at the end of the tunnel at this point, and there's no telling how old Trout will be when the Angels emerge as contenders once again.

ROTATION There is something to be said for quantity being as important as quality in starting pitching given the challenges of a 162-game schedule. The Angels certainly learned that last year when injuries gutted their starting rotation. A year later, it is quantity they have — even with longtime fixture Jered Weaver gone. As many as 12 pitchers could be considered candidates for the 2017 starting rotation. It's a group that includes uninspiring veterans such as Ricky Nolasco and Jesse Chavez, others returning from injuries such as Tyler Skaggs and Matt Shoemaker and faded prospects such as Alex Meyer and Brooks Pounders. The Angels' one shot at a high-quality starter, Garrett Richards, comes with reservations. They figure to proceed cautiously with the young ace, who appears to have avoided Tommy John surgery with stem-cell therapy.

BULLPEN Huston Street is an established closer with 324 career saves. But at age 33, he is coming off the worst season of his career (due in large part to injuries that led to knee surgery in August), and the Angels will rethink their bullpen hierarchy in spring training. Cam Bedrosian, 25, has emerged as a legitimate closer candidate after he posted a 1.12 ERA, 1.09 WHIP and 11.4 strikeouts per nine innings in 45 appearances for the Angels last season. Veteran Andrew Bailey is a former All-Star closer (albeit several years ago). However the roles sort out in the spring, those three will handle the late innings in 2017 with a grab-bag of players that includes J.C. Ramirez, Deolis Guerra, Mike Morin, Jose Alvarez and Daniel Wright filling out the bullpen.

MIDDLE INFIELD Shortstop Andrelton Simmons was everything the Angels hoped for defensively last year and improved some offensively, batting .281 (his highest full-season average) with a .690 OPS (his highest since his first full-season in 2013) — though his pop has all but disappeared since an aberrational 17-homer debut in 2013. After making do at second last year, Eppler went back to the trade market this winter and acquired a displaced Danny Espinosa from the Washington Nationals. A shortstop in D.C., Espinosa will move to second base in Anaheim, pairing with Simmons to give the Angels exceptional defense up the middle.

CORNERS Eppler addressed an annual issue in Anaheim when he acquired Yunel Escobar from the Nationals in December 2015. Escobar has joined a long line of players who have taken up temporary residence at third base for the Angels. Anyone remember Dallas McPherson, Brandon Wood, Chone Figgins, Maicer Izturis, Alberto Callaspo and David Freese? But Escobar has given them adequate defense and filled the leadoff spot with a .304 average in 2016. That was enough for the Angels to pick up his contract option for 2017. With Pujols appearing to enter the full-time (or nearly so) DH phase of his career, former first-round draft pick C.J. Cron got his chance to establish himself as an everyday player. The young first baseman did hit 16 home runs last season, valuable support for Trout, Pujols and Kole Calhoun on a team that finished 13th in the American League in slugging percentage.

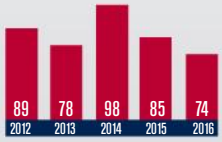
OUTFIELD The outfield is in good hands — even more so now that the acquisition of Cameron Maybin has given the Angels a legitimate left fielder. Maybin (career-high .315 batting average and .801 OPS for the Tigers last season) fills what has been an absolute black hole in left field the past two seasons. He can't help but do better than the .592 and .584 OPS Angels left fielders combined for in 2015 and 2016, last in the majors both seasons. Trout and Calhoun remain the heart of the Angels' everyday lineup in center and right, respectively. Trout won his second AL MVP last season, somehow managing to get even better in his fifth full season. He matched his career-high in OPS (.991), set a new high in on-base percentage (.441) and raised his batting average back over .300 (.315) for the first time since 2013.

2017 PREDICTION
4th
AL West

2016 RECORD
74-88

HOME: 40-41 **ROAD:** 34-47

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND



TEAM INFO

ANGEL STADIUM OF ANAHEIM
Opened: 1966 **Capacity:** 45,050
Left: 330' **Center:** 400' **Right:** 330'
Tickets: 888-796-HALO
losangeles.angels.mlb.com

FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
OF Mike Trout

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
RHP Garrett Richards

BULL MARKET
RP Cam Bedrosian

BEAR MARKET
3B Yunel Escobar

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES Richards

IPO RHP Alex Meyer

FUTURES MARKET 1B Matt Thaiss

INSIDER TIP Bedrosian, who wields the only legit "closer's arm" on the staff, will seize that role in short order.

STATLINE

OPS IN A 30-SB SEASON: AL SINCE 1991

1. Mike Trout, 2016	**.991**
2. Mike Trout, 2013	**.988**
3. Chuck Knoblauch, 1996	.965
4. Mike Trout, 2012	**.963**
5. Roberto Alomar, 2001	.956

Richards: David Banks-USA TODAY Sports; Trout: Tom DiPace

PROJECTED LINEUP

LINEUP

3B	Yunel Escobar (R)
LF	**Cameron Maybin (R)**
CF	Mike Trout (R)
DH	Albert Pujols (R)
RF	Kole Calhoun (L)
1B	C.J. Cron (R)
2B	Danny Espinosa (S)
SS	Andrelton Simmons (R)
C	Martin Maldonado (R)

BENCH

C	**Carlos Perez (R)**
UT	Jefry Marte (R)
3B	Kaleb Cowart (S)
OF	Ben Revere (L)
INF	Cliff Pennington (S)

ROTATION

RHP	Garrett Richards
LHP	Tyler Skaggs
RHP	Matt Shoemaker
RHP	**Ricky Nolasco**
RHP	Jesse Chavez

BULLPEN

RHP	Huston Street (Closer)
RHP	**Cam Bedrosian**
RHP	Andrew Bailey
RHP	J.C. Ramirez
RHP	Deolis Guerra
LHP	Jose Alvarez

NEXT LEVEL

Cameron Maybin posted career bests across the board last season: a .315 batting average, .383 on-base percentage, .418 slugging percentage, 9.2 percent walk rate, and 17.6 percent strikeout rate.

Carlos Perez's 53 wRC+ (weighted runs created plus) was the fourth lowest among hitters with at least 290 plate appearances.

Ricky Nolasco's ERA dropped from 5.13 to 3.21 when he was traded from Minnesota to Los Angeles thanks to his BABIP dropping from .315 to a career-low .257.

Cam Bedrosian's strikeout rate shot up from 21.8 percent to 31.5 percent thanks to a 9.2-point drop in contact rate, 2.9-point rise in swings on pitches outside the strike zone, and 0.8-mph rise in average fastball velocity.

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE ANGELS

"Mike Trout has been the best player in the game for four or five years, and there's nothing he does that surprises you anymore. His arm was just OK when he first came up, but last year he turned it into a real strength. Albert Pujols doesn't drive the ball like he used to, but he's still a presence, and he'll keep getting 25 or 30 homers and driving in 100 for a while. The question with this team is: Will they pitch well enough to move up in the standings? They struggled on the mound last year, and I don't know how much they've improved. The best arm on the staff is Garrett Richards, but I don't think he can be a No. 1 because he's been hurt so much. The rest of the rotation is a bunch of 4s and 5s. Their closer, Huston Street, amazes me. He doesn't have closer stuff, but he might have the best makeup of any player in baseball."

STATISTICIAN

2 Players that have finished first or second in MVP voting for five consecutive seasons — Barry Bonds and Mike Trout.

1,490 Career wins for Mike Scioscia, third behind Bruce Bochy (1,789) and Dusty Baker (1,766) among active managers and 23rd all-time.

591 Career home runs for Albert Pujols entering 2017, ninth on the all-time list.

28 Starts at first base for Pujols in 2016, the fewest starts in the field in his career. Pujols started 123 games at DH.

156 Home runs by the Angels in 2016; only the Kansas City Royals hit fewer in the American League.

150 Career wins for Jered Weaver, second in Angels history to Chuck Finley (165). Weaver was not re-signed.

.235 Combined batting average of Angels' second basemen in 2016, 28th among all major-league teams.

MIKE TROUT

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3 OAK	4 OAK	5 OAK	6 OAK	7 SEA	8 SEA
9 SEA	10	11 TEX	12 TEX	13 TEX	14 KC	15 KC
16 KC	17 HOU	18 HOU	19 HOU	20 HOU	21 TOR	22 TOR
23 TOR	24 TOR	25 OAK	26 OAK	27 OAK	28 TEX	29 TEX
30 TEX						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2 SEA	3 SEA	4 SEA	5 HOU	6 HOU
7 HOU	8 OAK	9 OAK	10 OAK	11 DET	12 DET	13 DET
14 DET	15 CWS	16 CWS	17 CWS	18	19 NYM	20 NYM
21 NYM	22 TB	23 TB	24 TB	25 TB	26 MIA	27 MIA
28 MIA	29 ATL	30 ATL	31 ATL			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 MIN	2 MIN	3 MIN
4 MIN	5	6 DET	7 DET	8 DET	9 HOU	10 HOU
11 HOU	12 NYY	13 NYY	14 NYY	15 KC	16 KC	17 KC
18 KC	19	20 NYY	21 NYY	22 NYY	23 BOS	24 BOS
25 BOS	26 LAD	27 LAD	28 LAD	29 LAD	30 SEA	

July

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 SEA
2 SEA	3 MIN	4 MIN	5 MIN	6	7 TEX	8 TEX
9 TEX	10	11	12	13	14 TB	15 TB
16 TB	17	18 WAS	19 WAS	20	21 BOS	22 BOS
23 BOS	24	25 CLE	26 CLE	27 CLE	28 TOR	29 TOR
30 TOR	31					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 PHI	2 PHI	3 PHI	4 OAK	5 OAK
6 OAK	7 BAL	8 BAL	9 BAL	10 SEA	11 SEA	12 SEA
13 SEA	14	15 WAS	16 WAS	17	18 BAL	19 BAL
20 BAL	21 TEX	22 TEX	23 TEX	24 TEX	25 HOU	26 HOU
27 HOU	28 OAK	29 OAK	30 OAK	31		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 TEX	2 TEX
3 TEX	4 OAK	5 OAK	6 OAK	7	8 SEA	9 SEA
10 SEA	11	12 HOU	13 HOU	14 HOU	15 TEX	16 TEX
17 TEX	18	19 CLE	20 CLE	21 CLE	22 HOU	23 HOU
24 HOU	25 CWS	26 CWS	27 CWS	28 CWS	29 SEA	30 SEA
1 SEA						

HUSTON STREET

CATCHING A year ago at this time, the Angels were ready to hand their catching job over to Carlos Perez. By midseason, however, Perez was back in the minors and the Angels had turned to Jett Bandy instead. Bandy is gone, traded to the Milwaukee Brewers for a more established catcher, Martin Maldonado. Maldonado, 30, has never started more than 66 games in a season but will be the Angels' primary catcher with Perez backing him up. Maldonado is a good defender with above-average pitch-framing skills, giving the Angels plus-defenders at every position up the middle.

DH/BENCH Pujols' deterioration continues. He had foot surgery again in December, possibly delaying the start of his season, and has become a one-dimensional hitter, still able to drive the ball for home runs but posting a .266 average and sinking OPS in his five years with the Angels. Ben Revere was signed to a one-year deal to be the team's fourth outfielder; the Angels hope he can bounce back from a dismal season in Washington.

MANAGEMENT Things seem to have stabilized in Anaheim after recent years clouded by the power struggle between manager Mike Scioscia and former GM Jerry Dipoto and the ugly divorce between owner Arte Moreno and Hamilton. Eppler seems to have been given the kind of free hand his predecessors didn't have to tug the Angels into the 21st century. The longest-tenured manager in baseball (now entering his 18th season in Anaheim), Scioscia was never the New Age Luddite he was portrayed to be at times during the Dipoto regime. But he is more willing now to use the new tools a modern front office can provide.

FINAL ANALYSIS From 2002 through 2014, the Angels won at least 90 games seven times, won six division titles, reached the ALCS three times and won the franchise's only World Series championship in 2002. This is a much different era. Though Eppler defiantly says the Angels "intend to contend" in 2017, the road to fourth place is paved with good intentions.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

WORLD SERIES Angels shortstop Andrelton Simmons has committed to play for Team Netherlands in the World Baseball Classic. Simmons played for the Netherlands team during the 2013 WBC and hit a game-tying home run that helped the Netherlands beat Cuba and reach the semifinal round. Outfielder Mike Trout has been non-committal about playing for Team USA in the international competition.

ON THE MEND For the third time in the past five springs, Albert Pujols will be recovering from offseason surgery. In 2012, Pujols had knee surgery. A year later, Pujols tore the plantar fascia in his left foot but did not undergo surgery — until last winter when he had surgery on his right foot. Pujols tried shock-wave treatment on the plantar fascia in his right foot this past fall but ultimately had surgery in December. The Angels are optimistic Pujols (now 37) will recover in time for Opening Day or shortly after.

GOOD WORK For the third consecutive year, Angels lefthander Andrew Heaney was part of a group of big leaguers who traveled to Honduras during the offseason to help build a learning center on the outskirts of El Progreso, about 20 miles from San Pedro Sula (the second-largest city in Honduras). Heaney and fellow clients of ICON Sports Management delivered new tables and lockers for the meeting room and classrooms at the facility.

STADIUM TALK The Angels have resumed talks with the city of Anaheim about renovations to 50-year-old Angel Stadium. The team has until October 2018 to opt out of its current lease with the city, and talks between the two sides have been acrimonious at times. Angels owner Arte Moreno broke off talks with the city over a new stadium lease in October 2014. The city council approved the framework for a new lease in 2013, but objections were raised regarding development on land surrounding the stadium.

TO TJ OR NOT TJ The Angels lost both Garrett Richards and Heaney to ulnar collateral ligament injuries last May, but the two have taken very different roads on their recovery. Both underwent stem-cell therapy in hopes of avoiding Tommy John surgery. The treatment wasn't enough for Heaney, and he eventually underwent the ligament-replacement procedure. Richards' elbow, however, responded so well that he was able to pitch in the fall instructional league, touching 96 mph with his fastball. The Angels are optimistic that he has avoided Tommy John surgery and will enter the 2017 season fully healthy.

Gary A. Vasquez-USA TODAY Sports

ANGELS ROSTER

General Manager: Billy Eppler **Manager:** Mike Scioscia **Coaches:** Dino Ebel (bench), Alfredo Griffin (infield), Dave Hansen (hitting), Charles Nagy (pitching), Scott Radinsky (bullpen), Ron Roenicke (third base), Steve Soliz (catching and information), Paul Sorrento (asst. hitting)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
48	Jose Alvarez	L-L	5-11	190	5/6/89	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**1-3**	**3.45**	**64**	**0**	**0**	**57.1**	**71**	**15**	**51**
						Salt Lake (AAA)	1-0	2.45	5	0	0	7.1	5	5	7
37	Andrew Bailey	R-R	6-3	240	5/31/84	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**0-0**	**2.38**	**12**	**0**	**6**	**11.1**	**9**	**2**	**8**
						Salt Lake (AAA)	2-1	2.00	8	0	0	9.0	7	3	11
						PHILADELPHIA	**3-1**	**6.40**	**33**	**0**	**0**	**32.1**	**32**	**15**	**33**
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	1-0	1.50	5	0	1	6.0	4	2	12
32	Cam Bedrosian	R-R	6-0	230	10/2/91	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**2-0**	**1.12**	**45**	**0**	**1**	**40.1**	**30**	**14**	**51**
						Salt Lake (AAA)	1-0	3.24	5	0	1	8.1	7	4	14
	Vicente Campos	R-R	6-3	230	7/27/92	**ARIZONA**	**0-0**	**3.18**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**5.2**	**4**	**2**	**4**
						Reno (AAA)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	1.2	0	0	0
						Mobile (AA)	1-2	3.60	4	4	0	20.0	22	5	15
						Trenton (AA)	5-1	3.02	9	9	0	56.2	45	14	48
						Tampa (A)	4-2	3.49	10	10	0	59.1	50	23	56
	Jesse Chavez	R-R	6-2	175	8/21/83	**TORONTO**	**1-2**	**4.57**	**39**	**0**	**0**	**41.1**	**43**	**10**	**42**
						LOS ANGELES NL	**1-0**	**4.21**	**23**	**0**	**0**	**25.2**	**28**	**8**	**21**
54	Deolis Guerra	R-R	6-5	245	4/17/89	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**3-0**	**3.21**	**44**	**0**	**0**	**53.1**	**52**	**7**	**36**
						Salt Lake (AAA)	0-0	0.00	3	0	0	5.0	3	2	7
28	Andrew Heaney	L-L	6-2	195	6/5/91	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**0-1**	**6.00**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**6.0**	**7**	**0**	**7**
65	Greg Mahle	L-L	6-2	230	4/17/93	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**1-0**	**5.40**	**24**	**0**	**0**	**18.1**	**23**	**10**	**14**
						Salt Lake (AAA)	1-1	7.71	30	0	2	32.2	48	12	24
40	Alex Meyer	R-R	6-9	225	1/3/90	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**1-2**	**4.57**	**5**	**5**	**0**	**21.2**	**17**	**13**	**24**
						Salt Lake (AAA)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	4.0	2	0	6
						Inland Empire (A)	0-0	11.57	1	1	0	2.1	3	1	3
						AZL Angels (R)	0-0	1.69	3	3	0	5.1	6	1	12
						MINNESOTA	**0-1**	**12.27**	**2**	**1**	**0**	**3.2**	**8**	**4**	**5**
						Rochester (AAA)	1-1	1.04	3	2	1	17.1	11	4	19
	Keynan Middleton	R-R	6-2	185	9/12/93	Salt Lake (AAA)	0-1	4.91	8	0	2	14.2	14	4	14
						Arkansas (AA)	0-0	1.20	13	0	6	15.0	11	4	18
						Inland Empire (A)	1-1	3.72	25	0	0	36.1	22	20	56
64	Mike Morin	R-R	6-4	220	5/3/91	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**2-2**	**4.37**	**60**	**0**	**0**	**55.2**	**52**	**15**	**49**
						Salt Lake (AAA)	0-1	3.60	11	0	2	10.0	8	1	11
47	Ricky Nolasco	R-R	6-2	235	12/13/82	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**4-6**	**3.21**	**11**	**11**	**0**	**73.0**	**63**	**15**	**51**
						MINNESOTA	**4-8**	**5.13**	**21**	**21**	**0**	**124.2**	**139**	**29**	**93**
	Eduardo Paredes	R-R	6-1	170	3/6/95	Arkansas (AA)	0-3	3.35	35	0	8	48.1	46	14	43
						Inland Empire (A)	1-2	3.27	19	0	4	22.0	18	6	32
	Brooks Pounders	R-R	6-5	265	9/26/90	**KANSAS CITY**	**2-1**	**9.24**	**13**	**0**	**0**	**12.2**	**19**	**3**	**13**
						Omaha (AAA)	5-3	3.14	31	7	0	80.1	67	37	90
66	JC Ramirez	R-R	6-4	250	8/16/88	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**2-1**	**2.91**	**43**	**0**	**1**	**46.1**	**42**	**13**	**31**
						CINCINNATI	**1-3**	**6.40**	**27**	**0**	**1**	**32.1**	**35**	**9**	**28**
						Louisville (AAA)	0-0	0.00	5	0	0	6.0	4	3	10
43	Garrett Richards	R-R	6-3	210	5/27/88	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**1-3**	**2.34**	**6**	**6**	**0**	**34.2**	**31**	**15**	**34**
52	Matt Shoemaker	R-R	6-2	225	9/27/86	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**9-13**	**3.88**	**27**	**27**	**0**	**160.0**	**166**	**30**	**143**
						Salt Lake (AAA)	1-0	1.50	1	1	0	6.0	6	2	8
45	Tyler Skaggs	L-L	6-4	215	7/13/91	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**3-4**	**4.17**	**10**	**10**	**0**	**49.2**	**51**	**23**	**50**
						Salt Lake (AAA)	3-2	1.67	7	7	0	32.1	19	8	45
85	Nate Smith	L-L	6-3	210	8/28/91	Salt Lake (AAA)	8-9	4.61	26	26	0	150.1	166	44	122
16	Huston Street	R-R	6-0	205	8/2/83	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**3-2**	**6.45**	**26**	**0**	**9**	**22.1**	**31**	**12**	**14**
35	Nick Tropeano	R-R	6-4	200	8/27/90	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**3-2**	**3.56**	**13**	**13**	**0**	**68.1**	**70**	**31**	**68**
62	Daniel Wright	R-R	6-2	205	4/3/91	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**1-3**	**5.40**	**5**	**5**	**0**	**26.2**	**32**	**6**	**15**
						CINCINNATI	**0-2**	**7.62**	**4**	**2**	**0**	**13.0**	**25**	**2**	**6**
						Louisville (AAA)	6-5	6.13	17	12	0	83.2	109	25	65
						Pensacola (AA)	2-0	0.45	8	2	0	20.0	10	4	22
	Kirby Yates	L-R	5-10	210	3/25/87	**NEW YORK AL**	**2-1**	**5.23**	**41**	**0**	**0**	**41.1**	**41**	**19**	**50**
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	0-1	1.62	14	0	4	16.2	12	6	19

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	Martin Maldonado	R-R	6-0	230	8/16/86	**MILWAUKEE**	**.202**	**76**	**208**	**21**	**42**	**8**	**21**	**35**	**56**	**1**
58	Carlos Perez	R-R	6-0	210	10/27/90	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**.209**	**87**	**268**	**25**	**56**	**5**	**31**	**12**	**49**	**1**
						Salt Lake (AAA)	.359	10	39	9	14	3	10	1	7	0

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
22	Kaleb Cowart	S-R	6-3	225	6/2/92	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**.176**	**31**	**85**	**8**	**15**	**1**	**8**	**0**	**23**	**0**
						Salt Lake (AAA)	.280	107	414	58	116	9	58	37	100	18
24	C.J. Cron	R-R	6-4	235	1/5/90	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**.278**	**116**	**407**	**51**	**113**	**16**	**69**	**24**	**75**	**2**
						Salt Lake (AAA)	.150	6	20	0	3	0	2	3	5	1
0	Yunel Escobar	R-R	6-2	215	11/2/82	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**.304**	**132**	**517**	**68**	**157**	**5**	**39**	**40**	**67**	**0**
	Danny Espinosa	S-R	6-0	205	4/25/87	**WASHINGTON**	**.209**	**157**	**516**	**66**	**108**	**24**	**72**	**54**	**174**	**9**
	Nolan Fontana	L-R	5-11	195	6/6/91	Fresno (AAA)	.195	106	359	35	70	3	27	32	108	4
						Corpus Christi (AA)	.278	10	36	4	10	0	4	8	5	1
19	Jefry Marte	R-R	6-1	220	6/21/91	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**.252**	**88**	**258**	**38**	**65**	**15**	**44**	**18**	**59**	**2**
						Salt Lake (AAA)	.265	44	162	22	43	3	24	22	35	3
7	Cliff Pennington	S-R	5-11	195	6/15/84	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**.209**	**74**	**172**	**18**	**36**	**3**	**10**	**13**	**55**	**1**
						Salt Lake (AAA)	.304	7	23	3	7	0	3	3	4	0
						Inland Empire (A)	.333	2	6	0	2	0	0	1	1	0
5	Albert Pujols	R-R	6-3	240	1/16/80	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**.268**	**152**	**593**	**71**	**159**	**31**	**119**	**49**	**75**	**4**
2	Andrelton Simmons	R-R	6-2	200	9/4/89	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**.281**	**124**	**448**	**48**	**126**	**4**	**44**	**28**	**38**	**10**
						Salt Lake (AAA)	.333	4	18	0	6	0	5	0	2	1
						Inland Empire (A)	.333	2	6	2	2	0	0	0	0	0

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
56	Kole Calhoun	L-L	5-10	205	10/14/87	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**.271**	**157**	**594**	**91**	**161**	**18**	**75**	**67**	**118**	**2**
	Ryan LaMarre	R-L	6-1	210	11/21/88	**BOSTON**	**.000**	**5**	**5**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**2**	**0**
						Pawtucket (AAA)	.303	86	317	44	96	10	41	28	80	17
17	Cameron Maybin	R-R	6-3	215	4/4/87	**DETROIT**	**.315**	**94**	**349**	**65**	**110**	**4**	**43**	**36**	**69**	**15**
						Toledo (AAA)	.188	23	85	14	16	2	11	14	17	4
						Lakeland (A)	.231	4	13	3	3	0	0	2	2	1
	Ben Revere	L-R	5-9	175	5/3/88	**WASHINGTON**	**.217**	**103**	**350**	**44**	**76**	**2**	**24**	**18**	**34**	**14**
27	Mike Trout	R-R	6-2	235	8/7/91	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**.315**	**159**	**549**	**123**	**173**	**29**	**100**	**116**	**137**	**30**

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

MATT THAISS, 1B

For the second consecutive year, the Angels chose a college catcher with their first-round pick. But they had no intention of keeping Thaiss — who starred at the University of Virginia — behind the plate. It was Thaiss' bat that caught the Angels' attention, and he moved to first base in his professional debut at rookie-level Orem and Class A Burlington, where he hit a combined .292 with an .824 OPS in 67 games. The Angels are excited by the 21-year-old Thaiss' mature hitting approach as evidenced by his 55-to-74 strikeout-to walk totals at Virginia. That trend continued in his first taste of pro ball, where he had nearly as many walks (26) as strikeouts (32) in 264 at-bats. The left-handed hitter should put up good numbers in the hitter-friendly Cal League at Class A Inland Empire in 2017 and could move quickly through the Angels' thin farm system.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Jahmai Jones, OF (19) Jones' athleticism is a big plus in a system devoid of blue-chip prospects, but his skill set is still raw, and he'll likely need another year of development.

2. Matt Thaiss, 1B (21) The Angels considered him one of the best hitters in the 2016 draft and made him their first-round pick with hopes of developing his left-handed bat.

3. Taylor Ward, C (23) Pegged as a defense-first catcher, Ward hit just .249 in his full-season debut at Class A Inland Empire.

4. Alex Meyer, RHP (27) The Angels are the latest to take a chance on the 6'9" former first-round pick. He will get a chance to pitch in the Angels' 2017 rotation.

5. Brandon Marsh, OF (19) Like Jones, Marsh is a two-sport athlete with plus-speed and exceptional athleticism.

6. Nate Smith, LHP (25) Smith signed for just $12,000 but was named to the 2016 All-Star Futures Game in San Diego and could be in the Angels' 2017 bullpen.

7. Grayson Long, RHP (22) The Angels' third-round pick out of Texas A&M in 2015, the 6'5" Long has the look of a big-league starter but needs to stay healthy.

8. Jaime Barria, RHP (20) Could pay dividends if he continues to show the strike-throwing skills he flashed in his first full season for Class A Burlington last year.

9. Keynan Middleton, RHP (23) It's his high-90s fastball that prompted the Angels to add him to their 40-man roster in November.

10. Brooks Pounders, RHP (26) With the thinnest system in MLB, the Angels can afford to take a chance on a former high-round draft pick on his third organization.

OAKLAND ATHLETICS

The A's are making no promises about contending in 2017. It would be a stretch to suggest this team could keep up with the Rangers or Astros. The A's finished last in consecutive seasons and seem to have 2019 in their sights more than 2017. Maybe some of their young players will be reaching stardom by then. Maybe their hopes for a new ballpark will be more than a dream by then. Maybe they'd consider keeping their best players long term by then.

Until further notice, it's more of the same: Give young players the chance to succeed at the major-league level and, before they can reach their peak earning potential, dump them for younger players. It's a vicious cycle that sometimes works and sometimes turns ugly. The system seemed perfectly fine when the A's built playoff teams three straight seasons from 2012-14, but the past two years were a tough learning experience. The pattern isn't expected to change in the immediate future. That's not to say the next wave of young players doesn't have promise, including starting pitcher Sean Manaea, third baseman Ryon Healy, catcher Bruce Maxwell and second baseman Joey Wendle, all of whom had nice runs in their first big-league seasons. But the anticipated growing pains and deficiencies throughout the roster make it tough to believe the A's will make much noise in 2016.

ROTATION Manager Bob Melvin went into the new year able to pencil in three starters: Sonny Gray, Kendall Graveman and Manaea. Unless a veteran arm is added, the other two spots will be determined in spring training among a young field of Jharel Cotton, Andrew Triggs, Daniel Mengden, Raul Alcantara, Dillon Overton and Frankie Montas. The rotation ranked next to last in the league in ERA (4.84), and Gray posted his worst season (5–11, 5.69 ERA, 1.496 WHIP) while battling injuries — a far cry from his first three years in Oakland (2.88 ERA, 1.134 WHIP). A bounce-back year is a must for all concerned. The A's would be better with their ace returning to form, and his trade value would be better in case the A's decide to move him before the deadline or next winter. He's 27 with three more years of club control. While Gray struggled, Graveman was steady over a career-high 31 starts and 186 innings. Manaea scuffled after getting called up in April but eventually figured it out. His ERA was 3.86 in 25 games (24 starts) and 1.13 in four September starts. Cotton, acquired in the trade that shipped Josh Reddick to the Dodgers, posted a 2.15 ERA in five September starts.

BULLPEN The 2016 bullpen was better than the disastrous 2015 version, and the hope is for more improvement in 2017. Set-up man Ryan Dull could be front and center after enjoying a stellar rookie season. Dull stranded his first 36 inherited runners, the longest known streak in big-league history (complete records date to 1961), and he had the best season of any A's reliever with a 2.42 ERA and staff-high 70 appearances. Most of the bullpen is returning, and the A's would love a full season from Sean Doolittle, the projected closer last season who continued to have shoulder problems. Ryan Madson took over the closer's role and saved 30 games, and John Axford and Liam Hendriks are returning as complementary pieces. Alcantara and Daniel Coulombe will vie for jobs.

MIDDLE INFIELD After Marcus Semien's vast defensive improvement, the A's are set at shortstop. Second base is a different story. Jed Lowrie will need to prove he's healthy after August surgery to his left foot, and the top prospect at the position, Wendle, has only one month of big-league experience. Executive VP of baseball operations Billy Beane called second base "a concern" and was seeking depth. The A's could look long term at Chad Pinder or their top overall prospect, Franklin Barreto, a shortstop by trade who'll probably open at Triple-A. Semien cut his error total from 35 to 21 and supplied power with 27 homers and 75 RBIs, second on the team to Khris Davis in both categories, while hitting in eight spots in the batting order.

CORNERS Healy was a pleasant surprise, called up after the All-Star break and eventually taking over at third base. He hit .305 with 13 homers in half a season and likely will open 2017 in the middle of the lineup. Third baseman Matt Chapman, a first-round pick in 2014, collected 36 homers and 96 RBIs in two minor-league stops and appears destined for Triple-A Nashville. When and if Chapman breaks into the majors, Healy could move to first base, his natural position. For now, the first baseman is Yonder Alonso, who was arbitration eligible and re-signed for $4 million. He's a super defender and is due for a better year at the plate.

OUTFIELD Davis will return to left field after smacking 42 homers and collecting 102 RBIs and joining four Oakland heavyweights in the 40-homers club: Reggie Jackson, Mark McGwire, Jose Canseco and Jason Giambi. He will be joined by two newcomers, Rajai Davis and Matt Joyce. The AL leader in stolen bases last season (43) with Cleveland, Davis inked a one-year deal in

2017 PREDICTION
5th
AL West

2016 RECORD
69-93

HOME: 34-47 **ROAD:** 35-46

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

TEAM INFO

O.co COLISEUM
Opened: 1968 **Capacity:** 35,067
Left: 330' **Center:** 400' **Right:** 330'
Tickets: 800-326-4000
oakland.athletics.com

➤ FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
OF Khris Davis

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
RHP Sonny Gray

BULL MARKET
LHP Sean Manaea

BEAR MARKET
RHP Ryan Madson

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
RHP Sonny Gray

IPO Jharel Cotton

FUTURES MARKET SS/2B Franklin Barreto

INSIDER TIP Oakland's depth chart is a moving target. Barreto, catcher Bruce Maxwell and left-handed pitcher Sean Doolittle (reclaiming his closer's job) are among those who will soon assume more forward roles.

➤ STATLINE

SEASON OPP. AVG/RISP: 1940-2016

1. Chris Perez, 2010 Indians	.085
2t. Ryan Dull, 2016 Athletics	**.086**
2t. Tyler Clippard, 2011 Nationals	.086
4. Ken Tatum, 1969 Angels	.093
5. Greg Garrett, 1970 Angels	.095

(min. 80 batters faced w/ RISP)

Source: Baseball-Reference.com

Tom DiPace

PROJECTED LINEUP

LINEUP

CF	Rajai Davis (R)
2B	Jed Lowrie (S)
DH	Stephen Vogt (L)
LF	**Khris Davis (R)**
3B	Ryon Healy (R)
SS	Marcus Semien (R)
RF	Matt Joyce (L)
1B	Yonder Alonso (L)
C	Josh Phegley (R)

BENCH

2B	**Joey Wendle (L)**
C	Bruce Maxwell (L)
OF/1B	Mark Canha (R)
OF	Jake Smolinski (R)

ROTATION

RHP	**Sonny Gray**
RHP	Kendall Graveman
LHP	Sean Manaea
RHP	Jharel Cotton
RHP	Andrew Triggs

BULLPEN

RHP	Ryan Madson (Closer)
LHP	Sean Doolittle
RHP	John Axford
RHP	**Ryan Dull**
RHP	Liam Hendriks
RHP	Raul Alcantara
LHP	Daniel Coulombe

NEXT LEVEL

Khris Davis had one of the three true outcomes — a home run, walk or strikeout — in 41.0 percent of his plate appearances. He is one of 13 qualified hitters to eclipse 40 percent. That is down from 43.8 in 2015.

Joey Wendle hit .419 in A's wins last year (11 games) and .132 in A's losses (17 games).

Bad luck played into Sonny Gray's struggles. His home run per fly ball rate nearly doubled to 17.5 percent, and his strand rate dropped more than 10 points below his career average to 63.9 percent.

Ryan Dull is likely to regress from his 2.42 ERA because of his .209 BABIP, which was the lowest mark among qualified relievers and 89 points below league average.

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE ATHLETICS

"Every year they're rebuilding, and this is just another chapter. Their bullpen is a plus, and they should trade a guy to help the rotation. I liked what I saw from Jharel Cotton, who has excellent arm speed and could be a No. 3. They thought they had a No. 1 in Sonny Gray, who was one of the best pitchers in the league when he broke in. Now you wonder about his stamina. I hate to label a starter as a problem because of his size, but it's proven time and time again: Little guys usually struggle. Now he's been injured, and his trade value is way down. Their real issue is lack of offense in the infield, but there's not a lot of offense in the outfield, either. Khris Davis' power really played, and Marcus Semien and Ryon Healy have good power, too. But Semien is not a good defender, and there's just a lot of spare-part kind of guys fighting for spots."

STATISTICIAN

93	Losses for the A's in 2016, the second straight year they dropped 90-plus games. If the A's reach the 90 mark in 2017, it'd be the first time since 1977-79 with 90-plus losses three straight years.
1.74	ERA in first innings for Kendall Graveman last year, tied for the second lowest in the majors among pitchers with at least 30 first innings.
3	Former A's in the lineups for Game 7 of the World Series: Ben Zobrist and Addison Russell of the Cubs and Coco Crisp of the Indians. Jon Lester and Rajai Davis also played.
.285	Stephen Vogt's career batting average before the All-Star break. Problem is, he's a career .226 hitter after the break.
27	Home runs for Marcus Semien, tied for most in the majors by a shortstop with Colorado's Trevor Story.

KHRIS DAVIS

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3 LAA	4 LAA	5 LAA	6 LAA	7 TEX	8 TEX
9 TEX	10 KC	11	12 KC	13 KC	14 HOU	15 HOU
16 HOU	17 TEX	18 TEX	19 TEX	20 SEA	21 SEA	22 SEA
23 SEA	24	25 LAA	26 LAA	27 LAA	28 HOU	29 HOU
30 HOU						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2 MIN	3 MIN	4 MIN	5 DET	6 DET
7 DET	8 LAA	9 LAA	10 LAA	11	12 TEX	13 TEX
14 TEX	15 SEA	16 SEA	17 SEA	18 BOS	19 BOS	20 BOS
21 BOS	22	23 MIA	24 MIA	25	26 NYY	27 NYY
28 NYY	29 CLE	30 CLE	31 CLE			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 CLE	2 WAS	3 WAS
4 WAS	5 TOR	6 TOR	7 TOR	8	9 TB	10 TB (2)
11 TB	12	13 MIA	14 MIA	15 NYY	16 NYY	17 NYY
18 NYY	19 HOU	20 HOU	21 HOU	22 HOU	23 CWS	24 CWS
25 CWS	26	27 HOU	28 HOU	29 HOU	30 ATL	

July

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 ATL
2 ATL	3 CWS	4 CWS	5 CWS	6 SEA	7 SEA	8 SEA
9 SEA	10	11	12	13	14 CLE	15 CLE
16 CLE	17 TB	18 TB	19 TB	20	21 NYM	22 NYM
23 NYM	24 TOR	25 TOR	26 TOR	27 TOR	28 MIN	29 MIN
30 MIN	31 SF					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 SF	2 SF	3 SF	4 LAA	5 LAA
6 LAA	7	8 SEA	9 SEA	10 BAL	11 BAL	12 BAL
13 BAL	14 KC	15 KC	16 KC	17	18 HOU	19 HOU
20 HOU	21 BAL	22 BAL	23 BAL	24	25 TEX	26 TEX
27 TEX	28 LAA	29 LAA	30 LAA	31		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 SEA	2 SEA
3 SEA	4 LAA	5 LAA	6 LAA	7	8 HOU	9 HOU
10 HOU	11	12 BOS	13 BOS	14 BOS	15 PHI	16 PHI
17 PHI	18 DET	19 DET	20 DET	21	22 TEX	23 TEX
24 TEX	25 SEA	26 SEA	27 SEA	28 TEX	29 TEX	30 TEX
1 TEX						

January to play center field. Joyce was signed for two years and $11 million, mostly to play right and face right-handed pitchers. His .403 OBP was fourth best in the National League among hitters with at least 250 plate appearances.

CATCHING Two-time All-Star Stephen Vogt might open the season as the No. 1 catcher, but Bruce Maxwell is waiting in the wings after impressing the brass in his rookie season. Maxwell, who like Vogt bats left-handed, hit .283 in 33 games and started 17 times in September to give decision-makers a good look. It's possible Vogt and Josh Phegley will open the season as the catchers, but Maxwell might not be far away.

DH/BENCH The A's agreed that Billy Butler was a $30 million failure at DH and released him with more than a year to go in his contract. The A's pursued Edwin Encarnacion, who signed with Cleveland, and might rotate players at the DH spot, including Davis and Vogt. The A's don't have much infield depth, although Barreto could emerge quickly. Jake Smolinski, Brett Eibner and prospect Matt Olson are outfield options, as is Mark Canha, who's coming off hip surgery.

MANAGEMENT With the A's incrementally losing their revenue-sharing checks over the next four years, thanks to the new collective bargaining agreement, the team must get serious about a new park to generate more revenue. Meantime, team president Dave Kaval said every dollar generated would go to "the on-field product and the fan experience" but didn't provide specifics or say whether payroll would be slashed.

FINAL ANALYSIS The A's play in an antiquated stadium. They don't draw well. They trade their top players instead of paying them top dollar, making it tough for fans to be faithful. Of course, the sentiment would improve if the A's got off to a quick start, re-energized their fan base and even took steps toward constructing a baseball-only facility in Oakland. Miracles do happen.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

YOUNG A'S FAN Shortly before Matt Joyce signed with the A's, he came across his old kindergarten book in which he answered the what-do-you-want-to-be-when-you-grow-up question: He wanted to be a baseball player, and he wanted to play for the A's. "I don't know if that's fate," Joyce says, "but I thought that was really cool." Joyce's deal is for two years and $11 million.

RECORD INJURIES The A's need to stay on the field in 2017. Last year, they used the disabled list a team-record 27 times, and the shelved players missed a combined 1,810 games. The old Oakland records were 25 disabled list stints and 1,397 games. At least 11 players were on the DL every day from July 3 on, including 16 from Aug. 22-28.

SO LONG, WASH Valuable third-base/infield coach Ron Washington took a job with Atlanta, and his replacement is Chip Hale, who's familiar with Oakland. He was an A's coach before serving as the Diamondbacks' manager in 2015 and 2016. Washington was a big help to shortstop Marcus Semien, putting him through daily individual defensive drills, and now it's Hale's turn.

OPEN DOOR Dave Kaval, shortly after becoming new A's president, began meeting with fans to talk about the team's future and hopes for a new venue. One fan, a structural engineer, proposed a floating ballpark, suggesting that other potential sites were on landfill anyway. Kaval commended the fan for thinking outside the box but wasn't about to commit to a stadium floating in the San Francisco Bay.

TOUGH DRAW The A's averaged only 18,784 per home game in 2016, worst in the majors outside Tampa Bay. It was the lowest at the Oakland Coliseum since 2011.

BACK TO SCHOOL Outfielder Mark Canha returned to Cal to take classes in the fall semester and work toward a degree in political economy. The Marlins drafted Canha out of Cal in 2010, and he broke into the majors, playing 124 games in 2015, but he had hip surgery last year and played just 16 games. Aside from the college workload, Canha continued his rehab and expects to be 100 percent in spring training.

QUICKEST TO FINISH The A's had many issues, but no one could say they didn't play fast. Their games averaged two hours and 56 minutes, quickest in the majors. It was the first time since 2011 the A's averaged under three hours. Perhaps it was a result of an offense that scored the league's fewest runs and had the lowest on-base percentage.

Tom DiPace

ATHLETICS ROSTER

General Manager: David Forst **Manager:** Bob Melvin **Coaches:** Mike Aldrete (first base), Darren Bush (hitting), Scott Emerson (bullpen), Chip Hale (third base), Marcus Jensen (asst. hitting/catching), Mark Kotsay (bench), Curt Young (pitching)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
50	Raul Alcantara	R-R	6-4	220	12/4/92	**OAKLAND**	**1-3**	**7.25**	**5**	**5**	**0**	**22.1**	**31**	**4**	**14**
						Nashville (AAA)	4-0	1.18	8	8	0	45.2	38	3	32
						Midland (AA)	5-6	4.80	17	17	0	90.0	100	27	73
61	John Axford	R-R	6-5	220	4/1/83	**OAKLAND**	**6-4**	**3.97**	**68**	**0**	**3**	**65.2**	**65**	**30**	**60**
40	Chris Bassitt	R-R	6-5	220	2/22/89	**OAKLAND**	**0-2**	**6.11**	**5**	**5**	**0**	**28.0**	**35**	**14**	**23**
58	Paul Blackburn	R-R	6-1	195	12/4/93	Tennessee (AA)	6-4	3.17	18	18	0	102.1	96	26	72
						Jackson (AA)	3-1	3.54	8	7	0	40.2	42	9	27
45	Jharel Cotton	R-R	5-11	195	1/19/92	**OAKLAND**	**2-0**	**2.15**	**5**	**5**	**0**	**29.1**	**20**	**4**	**23**
						Nashville (AAA)	3-1	2.82	6	6	0	38.1	28	7	36
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	8-5	4.90	22	16	0	97.1	80	32	119
35	Daniel Coulombe	L-L	5-10	190	10/26/89	**OAKLAND**	**3-1**	**4.53**	**35**	**0**	**0**	**47.2**	**37**	**17**	**54**
						Nashville (AAA)	0-0	1.08	20	0	0	25.0	18	6	35
62	Sean Doolittle	L-L	6-2	210	9/26/86	**OAKLAND**	**2-3**	**3.23**	**44**	**0**	**4**	**39.0**	**33**	**8**	**45**
						Nashville (AAA)	0-0	1.50	6	0	0	6.0	4	1	10
66	Ryan Dull	R-R	5-9	175	10/2/89	**OAKLAND**	**5-5**	**2.42**	**70**	**0**	**3**	**74.1**	**50**	**15**	**73**
49	Kendall Graveman	R-R	6-2	200	12/21/90	**OAKLAND**	**10-11**	**4.11**	**31**	**31**	**0**	**186.0**	**196**	**47**	**108**
54	Sonny Gray	R-R	5-10	190	11/7/89	**OAKLAND**	**5-11**	**5.69**	**22**	**22**	**0**	**117.0**	**133**	**42**	**94**
32	Jesse Hahn	R-R	6-4	215	7/30/89	**OAKLAND**	**2-4**	**6.02**	**9**	**9**	**0**	**46.1**	**57**	**19**	**23**
						Nashville (AAA)	1-7	4.32	15	15	0	66.2	72	34	46
31	Liam Hendriks	R-R	6-0	200	2/10/89	**OAKLAND**	**0-4**	**3.76**	**53**	**0**	**0**	**64.2**	**69**	**14**	**71**
						Nashville (AAA)	0-0	3.86	3	0	0	4.2	4	2	3
44	Ryan Madson	L-R	6-6	225	8/28/80	**OAKLAND**	**6-7**	**3.62**	**63**	**0**	**30**	**64.2**	**63**	**20**	**49**
55	Sean Manaea	R-L	6-5	245	2/1/92	**OAKLAND**	**7-9**	**3.86**	**25**	**24**	**0**	**144.2**	**135**	**37**	**124**
						Nashville (AAA)	2-0	1.50	3	3	0	18.0	16	4	21
33	Daniel Mengden	R-R	6-2	190	2/19/93	**OAKLAND**	**2-9**	**6.50**	**14**	**14**	**0**	**72.0**	**83**	**33**	**71**
						Nashville (AAA)	8-2	1.67	13	13	0	75.1	54	17	67
						Midland (AA)	2-0	0.78	4	4	0	23.0	15	12	28
72	Frankie Montas	R-R	6-2	255	3/21/93	Oklahoma City (AAA)	0-0	2.38	4	3	0	11.1	12	2	15
						Tulsa (AA)	0-0	1.93	3	1	0	4.2	2	1	7
36	Zach Neal	R-R	6-3	220	11/9/88	**OAKLAND**	**2-4**	**4.24**	**24**	**6**	**2**	**70.0**	**72**	**6**	**27**
						Nashville (AAA)	7-2	3.21	11	11	0	61.2	62	8	32
47	Dillon Overton	L-L	6-2	175	8/17/91	**OAKLAND**	**1-3**	**11.47**	**7**	**5**	**0**	**24.1**	**48**	**7**	**17**
						Nashville (AAA)	13-5	3.29	21	20	0	125.2	132	31	105
60	Andrew Triggs	R-R	6-4	220	3/16/89	**OAKLAND**	**1-1**	**4.31**	**24**	**6**	**0**	**56.1**	**56**	**13**	**55**
						Nashville (AAA)	2-1	2.95	16	0	2	18.1	16	5	21
63	Bobby Wahl	R-R	6-2	210	3/21/92	Nashville (AAA)	1-0	2.79	9	0	4	9.2	7	6	14
						Midland (AA)	0-1	2.21	33	0	10	40.2	26	17	48
						Stockton (A)	0-0	6.75	3	0	0	4.0	3	5	3

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
13	Bruce Maxwell	L-R	6-1	250	12/20/90	**OAKLAND**	**.283**	**33**	**92**	**8**	**26**	**1**	**14**	**8**	**24**	**0**
						Nashville (AAA)	.321	60	193	27	62	10	41	24	38	1
19	Josh Phegley	R-R	5-10	230	2/12/88	**OAKLAND**	**.256**	**25**	**78**	**11**	**20**	**1**	**10**	**5**	**13**	**0**
						Nashville (AAA)	.316	5	19	2	6	0	1	4	6	0
21	Stephen Vogt	L-R	6-0	225	11/1/84	**OAKLAND**	**.251**	**137**	**490**	**54**	**123**	**14**	**56**	**35**	**83**	**0**

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
17	Yonder Alonso	L-R	6-1	230	4/8/87	**OAKLAND**	**.253**	**156**	**482**	**52**	**122**	**7**	**56**	**45**	**74**	**3**
1	Franklin Barreto	R-R	5-10	190	2/27/96	Nashville (AAA)	.353	4	17	2	6	1	3	0	4	0
						Midland (AA)	.281	119	462	63	130	10	50	36	90	30
20	Mark Canha	R-R	6-2	210	2/15/89	**OAKLAND**	**.122**	**16**	**41**	**4**	**5**	**3**	**6**	**0**	**20**	**0**
25	Ryon Healy	R-R	6-5	225	1/10/92	**OAKLAND**	**.305**	**72**	**269**	**36**	**82**	**13**	**37**	**12**	**60**	**0**
						Nashville (AAA)	.318	49	192	33	61	6	30	13	40	0
						Midland (AA)	.338	36	145	27	49	8	34	18	35	1
8	Jed Lowrie	S-R	6-0	180	4/17/84	**OAKLAND**	**.263**	**87**	**338**	**30**	**89**	**2**	**27**	**26**	**65**	**0**
12	Max Muncy	L-R	6-0	210	8/25/90	**OAKLAND**	**.186**	**51**	**113**	**13**	**21**	**2**	**8**	**20**	**24**	**0**
						Nashville (AAA)	.251	64	223	34	56	8	26	35	54	5
57	Yairo Munoz	R-R	6-1	165	1/23/95	Midland (AA)	.240	102	387	44	93	9	39	23	76	6
22	Renato Nunez	R-R	6-1	220	4/4/94	**OAKLAND**	**.133**	**9**	**15**	**0**	**2**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**3**	**0**
						Nashville (AAA)	.228	128	505	61	115	23	75	31	119	2
18	Chad Pinder	R-R	6-2	195	3/29/92	**OAKLAND**	**.235**	**22**	**51**	**4**	**12**	**1**	**4**	**3**	**14**	**0**
						Nashville (AAA)	.258	107	426	72	110	14	51	25	108	5
10	Marcus Semien	R-R	6-0	195	9/17/90	**OAKLAND**	**.238**	**159**	**568**	**72**	**135**	**27**	**75**	**51**	**139**	**10**
11	Joey Wendle	L-R	6-1	190	4/26/90	**OAKLAND**	**.260**	**28**	**96**	**11**	**25**	**1**	**11**	**6**	**16**	**2**
						Nashville (AAA)	.279	125	491	81	137	12	61	26	112	14

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
46	Jaycob Brugman	L-L	6-0	195	1/18/92	Nashville (AAA)	.295	94	386	50	114	7	67	36	88	5
						Midland (AA)	.261	38	157	27	41	5	20	16	33	2
2	Khris Davis	R-R	5-10	195	12/21/87	**OAKLAND**	**.247**	**150**	**555**	**85**	**137**	**42**	**102**	**42**	**166**	**1**
	Rajai Davis	R-R	5-10	195	10/19/80	**CLEVELAND**	**.249**	**134**	**454**	**74**	**113**	**12**	**48**	**33**	**106**	**43**
16	Brett Eibner	R-R	6-4	225	12/2/88	**OAKLAND**	**.165**	**44**	**109**	**10**	**18**	**3**	**12**	**13**	**27**	**0**
						Nashville (AAA)	.308	4	13	4	4	1	2	5	6	0
						KANSAS CITY	.231	26	78	11	18	3	10	6	23	0
						Omaha (AAA)	.288	50	184	37	53	11	32	30	48	5
23	Matt Joyce	L-R	6-2	205	8/3/84	**PITTSBURGH**	**.242**	**140**	**231**	**45**	**56**	**13**	**42**	**59**	**67**	**1**
28	Matt Olson	L-R	6-5	230	3/29/94	**OAKLAND**	**.095**	**11**	**21**	**3**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**7**	**4**	**0**
						Nashville (AAA)	.235	131	464	69	109	17	60	71	132	1
5	Jake Smolinski	R-R	5-11	205	2/9/89	**OAKLAND**	**.238**	**99**	**290**	**28**	**69**	**7**	**27**	**19**	**44**	**1**
						Nashville (AAA)	.248	39	145	20	36	3	15	11	23	6

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

A.J. PUK, LHP

The 6'7" Puk, the sixth overall pick in the draft, will be in the A's big-league camp as a non-roster invitee. Puk (pronounced "Puck") made 10 starts for short-season Vermont and went 0–4 but posted a 3.03 ERA and struck out 40 batters in 32.2 innings. He walked 12 and will need to improve his command. At Florida, Puk walked 37 batters in 73.2 innings, and A's scouting director Eric Kubota predicted the pitcher eventually would "get his command on par with his stuff." Puk throws a mid- to high-90s fastball, sharp slider and changeup that he says he's developing. Given his overpowering stuff at Florida (101 strikeouts in 70 innings) and the fact he was the first college pitcher in the draft, the 21-year-old could be on the fast track.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Franklin Barreto, SS (21) Arrived from the Blue Jays in the Josh Donaldson trade after the 2014 season and hit .281 with 30 steals last season in the Texas League before getting promoted to Triple-A.

2. Matt Chapman, 3B (23) Had 36 homers (ranking third in the minors), 96 RBIs and is an above-average defender (powerful arm) but struck out 173 times and hit .237.

3. Jharel Cotton, RHP (25) One of three pitchers acquired from the Dodgers for Rich Hill and Josh Reddick, Cotton made five starts for the A's and is a leading candidate to be a fourth or fifth starter.

4. A.J. Puk, LHP (21) Control issues and back spasms in his final year at Florida might have been why he slipped to sixth overall in the draft. He had been projected to go higher.

5. Bruce Maxwell, C (26) Hit .283 in 33 games for A's last year and could crack the Opening Day roster.

6. Grant Holmes, RHP (21) Holmes averaged more than 10 strikeouts per nine innings his first two pro seasons and then slipped to 8.3 in High-A last season.

7. Chad Pinder, INF (25) The Texas League MVP in 2015, Pinder didn't have the same sort of success at Triple-A last year but still got called up to the majors in late August.

8. Frankie Montas, RHP (24) Traded to the A's on Aug. 1, his third career trade. Recovered from a rib injury and pitched effectively in the Arizona Fall League.

9. Daniel Gossett, RHP (24) Made three minor-league stops last year including Triple-A and went 10–6 with a 2.69 ERA and 1.080 WHIP in 27 starts.

10. Lazaro Armenteros, OF (17) The Cuban defector signed for $3 million in July after impressive power and speed displays in international competition.

SEATTLE MARINERS

2017 PREDICTION
3rd
AL West

2016 RECORD
86-76

HOME: 44-37 **ROAD:** 42-39

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

TEAM INFO

SAFECO FIELD
Opened: 1999 **Capacity:** 47,860
Left: 331' **Center:** 405' **Right:** 326'
Tickets: 206-346-4000
seattle.mariners.mlb.com

➤ FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
2B Robinson Cano

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
RHP Edwin Diaz

BULL MARKET
LHP James Paxton

BEAR MARKET
RHP Hisashi Iwakuma

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
RHP Nathan Karns

IPO 1B Dan Vogelbach

FUTURES MARKET OF Tyler O'Neill

INSIDER TIP There is so much sorting out to be done in the Mariners outfield that it's best to steer clear of all the principals. If you're feeling adventurous in the end game, however, roll the dice on Mitch Haniger.

➤ STATLINE

BALLS WITH 100+ MPH EXIT VELOCITY: 2016

1. Miguel Cabrera, Tigers	192
2. Nelson Cruz, Mariners	**174**
3. Manny Machado, Orioles	163
4. Robinson Cano, Mariners	**162**
5. Mark Trumbo, Orioles	160

AP Images

The goal in Seattle is simple — make the playoffs. While most teams have similar aspirations, the Mariners have gone longer than any other team in MLB without a postseason appearance — 15 seasons. That growing number looms over the organization, darkening the often-gray skies in Seattle. With the core pieces of the group that went 86–76 in 2016 returning, expectations are high for 2017. To achieve them, a starting rotation that was decimated by injuries a year ago must improve and find some consistency. The Mariners could be relying on three rookies — outfielders Ben Gamel and Mitch Haniger and first baseman Dan Vogelbach — to play significant roles. The trio of Robinson Cano, Nelson Cruz and Kyle Seager is as good as any in baseball. It will be the pieces around the three stars that determine Seattle's success.

ROTATION A year ago, Seattle got 57 starts of five innings or fewer and produced a record of 13–44 in those games. The disappointments started with staff ace Felix Hernandez, who posted an 11–8 record with a 3.82 ERA in 25 starts. He missed six weeks with a calf strain, but even when he was healthy, signs of deterioration and age were noticeable. He lacked consistent command as evidenced by his 1.88 strikeout-to-walk ratio — the worst of his career. The organization challenged Hernandez to come back in better shape and more prepared for 2017. Hisashi Iwakuma did not miss a start in 2016, but he fatigued late in the season. At age 35, he wins games with command and deception, but those can only go so far. With Taijuan Walker traded in the offseason, lefty James Paxton is the only power arm on the staff. After starting the season in Triple-A, he went 6–7 with a 3.79 ERA in 20 starts. The final two spots will be sorted out among righthanders Nathan Karns, Rob Whalen and Chris Heston and lefty Ariel Miranda.

BULLPEN The bullpen is much more a known quantity this season with at least five relievers from last season expected to fill spots. Hard-throwing youngster Edwin Diaz took over the closing duties from Steve Cishek in July and excelled, saving 18 games in 21 opportunities. A converted starting pitcher, Diaz tired in the season's final months. Cishek, who blew seven saves to lose the closer's job, is expected to be Diaz's late-inning setup man. It's a role he had success in late in the season. Cishek might not be ready by Opening Day as he recovers from offseason hip surgery, but the Mariners expect him to be good to go by late April. The lack of a late-inning situational left-handed reliever was addressed in the offseason with the signing of veteran Marc Rzepczynski to a two-year contract. He has limited left-handed hitters to a .222 batting average with a .291 on-base percentage and .298 slugging percentage over his career. Hard-throwing right hander Dan Altavilla, who like Diaz jumped from Double-A to the big leagues, is expected to fill a middle relief role.

MIDDLE INFIELD When Jean Segura steps onto the field on Opening Day, he'll be the 10th shortstop that Cano has played with in his three seasons with the Mariners. Segura will easily be the best of that undistinguished list, which is why Seattle acquired him in the offseason. Segura is coming off a career year with the Diamondbacks, hitting .319 with an .867 OPS, 41 doubles, seven triples, 20 home runs, 64 RBIs and 33 steals in 153 games. Cano is coming off an even better 2016. He showed no effects from offseason hernia surgery, hitting .298 with an .883 OPS, a career-high 39 homers and 103 RBIs. Beyond the gaudy offensive numbers, Cano returned to form in the field, making stellar defensive plays at second. He also embraced a leadership role in the clubhouse that hadn't been evident in his first two seasons with Seattle.

CORNERS Seager just continues to put up consistently good numbers with slight increases each season. In 2016, he hit .278 with an .858 OPS, 30 homers and 99 RBIs in 158 games. He did commit an uncharacteristic 22 errors at third base, botching some routine ground balls moving to his left. But the Mariners believe it's correctable. While Seattle has a cornerstone at third, the revolving door at first base continues. The plan for this season is to use Vogelbach and veteran Danny Valencia in a platoon of sorts. The Mariners like the left-handed-hitting Vogelbach's approach of power and patience at the plate. The right-handed-hitting Valencia is a proven masher of left-handed pitching in his well-traveled career.

OUTFIELD On a given day, center fielder Leonys Martin could find rookies to his left and right. The Mariners plan to give extended looks to youngsters Gamel and Haniger this season in an effort to be more athletic in the outfield. Gamel was acquired in late August and played in 27 games for Seattle. Seattle picked up Haniger in the Segura trade. He was Arizona's Minor League Player of the Year in 2016, hitting .321 with a .999 OPS between the Double-A and Triple-A levels. The Mariners still have veteran left-handed hitter Seth Smith as well. He fills a role against right-handed pitching.

PROJECTED LINEUP

NEXT LEVEL

LINEUP

SS	**Jean Segura (R)**
RF	Seth Smith (L)
2B	Robinson Cano (L)
DH	Nelson Cruz (R)
3B	Kyle Seager (L)
1B	Danny Valencia (R)
CF	Leonys Martin (L)
C	Mike Zunino (R)
LF	Ben Gamel (L)

BENCH

OF	Mitch Haniger (R)
C	**Carlos Ruiz (R)**
INF	Shawn O'Malley (S)
1B	Daniel Vogelbach (L)

ROTATION

RHP	Felix Hernandez
LHP	**James Paxton**
RHP	Hisashi Iwakuma
RHP	Nathan Karns
RHP	Chris Heston

BULLPEN

RHP	**Edwin Diaz (Closer)**
RHP	Steve Cishek
RHP	Dan Altavilla
RHP	Nick Vincent
RHP	Evan Scribner
LHP	Marc Rzepczynski
LHP	Ariel Miranda

Jean Segura hit .319 last season in part by striking the ball better. His hard contact rate jumped 10.0 points to a career-best 29.7 percent, while his soft contact rate fell 9.4 points to a career-best 16.2 percent.

Carlos Ruiz had a six-year high in walk rate (11.6 percent) and four-year high in hard contact rate (33.9 percent).

James Paxton's 2.80 FIP was best among AL pitchers with at least 120 IP. He cut his walk rate to 4.7 percent, and his average fastball velocity jumped 2.6 mph to 96.9 mph.

Edwin Diaz's 2.79 ERA was low despite some bad luck. His .377 BABIP was the highest among qualified relievers and 79 points above league average.

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE MARINERS

"They're good enough on the field to win, but they need to strengthen that rotation, because Felix Hernandez and Hisashi Iwakuma are on the decline. Felix is still an ace, but he's not a top-10 guy anymore, and for years he was top 3. He's lost some velocity. I've always been a believer in James Paxton. He's never performed for a whole year, but he's still got all kinds of ceiling. The rotation falls off after that, because they traded Taijuan Walker to buy high on Jean Segura. He had a career year in a hitter's park in Arizona, and his BABIP was abnormally high, but he reestablished himself last year, and he'll definitely help them. They really like Dan Vogelbach to platoon with Danny Valencia at first. Vogelbach's a huge, non-athletic guy, but he's always hit and drawn walks in the minors, and they're betting that will translate."

STATISTICIAN

223 Home runs hit by the Mariners in 2016, second in the American League and third in the majors.

161 Games played by Robinson Cano in a bounce-back 2016.

19 Mariners who went on the disabled list in 2016, which was the most in club history. The list included four members of Seattle's Opening Day starting rotation.

25 Blown saves by the bullpen, second most in the AL.

15.33 Strikeouts per nine innings rate of hard-throwing rookie closer Edwin Diaz, who struck out 88 batters in 51.2 innings.

60 The MLB-leading number of one-run games the Mariners played, a club record. Seattle went 30–30 in those games.

99.9 Percent of total games (927 of 928) played by every team in the Mariners' organization that had postseason implications or was a postseason game. The Mariners' last regular-season game was the lone exception.

ROBINSON CANO

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3 HOU	4 HOU	5 HOU	6 HOU	7 LAA	8 LAA
9 LAA	10 HOU	11 HOU	12 HOU	13	14 TEX	15 TEX
16 TEX	17 MIA	18 MIA	19 MIA	20 OAK	21 OAK	22 OAK
23 OAK	24	25 DET	26 DET	27 DET	28 CLE	29 CLE
30 CLE						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2 LAA	3 LAA	4 LAA	5 TEX	6 TEX
7 TEX	8	9 PHI	10 PHI	11 TOR	12 TOR	13 TOR
14 TOR	15 OAK	16 OAK	17 OAK	18 CWS	19 CWS	20 CWS
21 CWS	22	23 WAS	24 WAS	25 WAS	26 BOS	27 BOS
28 BOS	29 COL	30 COL	31 COL			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 COL	2 TB	3 TB
4 TB	5	6 MIN	7 MIN	8 MIN	9 TOR	10 TOR
11 TOR	12 MIN	13 MIN	14 MIN	15 MIN	16 TEX	17 TEX
18 TEX	19 DET	20 DET	21 DET	22 DET	23 HOU	24 HOU
25 HOU	26	27 PHI	28 PHI	29	30 LAA	

July

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 LAA
2 LAA	3 KC	4 KC	5 KC	6 OAK	7 OAK	8 OAK
9 OAK	10	11	12	13	14 CWS	15 CWS
16 CWS	17 HOU	18 HOU	19 HOU	20 NYY	21 NYY	22 NYY
23 NYY	24 BOS	25 BOS	26 BOS	27	28 NYM	29 NYM
30 NYM	31 TEX					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 TEX	2 TEX	3 KC	4 KC	5 KC
6 KC	7	8 OAK	9 OAK	10 LAA	11 LAA	12 LAA
13 LAA	14 BAL	15 BAL	16 BAL	17	18 TB	19 TB
20 TB	21 ATL	22 ATL	23 ATL	24	25 NYY	26 NYY
27 NYY	28 BAL	29 BAL	30 BAL	31		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 OAK	2 OAK
3 OAK	4 HOU	5 HOU	6 HOU	7	8 LAA	9 LAA
10 LAA	11 TEX	12 TEX	13 TEX	14 TEX	15 HOU	16 HOU
17 HOU	18	19 TEX	20 TEX	21 TEX	22 CLE	23 CLE
24 CLE	25 OAK	26 OAK	27 OAK	28	29 LAA	30 LAA
1 LAA						

KYLE SEAGER

CATCHING Mike Zunino is back after spending the first part of the 2016 season in Triple-A to work on his swing. The changes yielded some extended periods of success, but a late swoon still put his batting average at .207 with 65 strikeouts in 164 at-bats. He did hit 12 homers and drive in 31 runs while still showing exemplary receiving and framing skills behind the plate. The Mariners acquired veteran Carlos Ruiz to serve as backup. Ruiz turns 38 before the season, but he still can hit left-handed pitching and provides a solid role model for Zunino and some insurance for the Mariners.

DH/BENCH Cruz is not bothered by age or the unfriendly parks of the AL West. At 36, he hit .287 while posting team highs with a .915 OPS, 43 homers and 105 RBIs in 155 games. He also became more accepting of his transition to a near full-time DH. One of the big bonuses of acquiring Valencia was his ability to play first base, third base and both corner outfield spots. It gives manager Scott Servais some options. Shawn O'Malley proved to be the team's best utility player option and showed he could play shortstop at a decent level, something that the new management team didn't expect. The acquisition of speedy Tayler Motter will provide some competition during spring training.

MANAGEMENT Servais had never managed a game at any level in his life. There were times in the mechanics of a game where that inexperience was exposed in 2016. He dealt with injury issues to his starting rotation and a roster that was flawed and limited in versatility. But Servais got his team to buy in to a new way of thinking, preparing and playing. It helped that he got Cano, Cruz and Seager to believe in this new philosophy early in spring and embrace leadership roles.

FINAL ANALYSIS It seems unlikely that Cano, Cruz and Seager can improve much on the stellar production of last year. But better roster depth around the trio should allow the Mariners to be competitive in a very tough American League West. It will come down to starting pitching success.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

WHEELING AND DEALING Jerry Dipoto's second year as general manager of the Mariners brought plenty of activity. While many teams waited for the collective bargaining agreement to be decided to really get going in the offseason, Dipoto made seven trades before the MLB winter meetings in December. Of the Opening Day roster in 2016, only 11 players remain in the organization.

FOUR DECADES OF FUTILITY The Mariners will celebrate the 40-year anniversary of the franchise during the 2017 season. The team has played in the postseason just four times (1995, '97, 2000 and '01) and has never appeared in a World Series. The Mariners have the longest postseason drought in baseball.

NEW BOSSES This will be the first full season of a new ownership of the Mariners led by new CEO John Stanton. In April 2016, the club announced that an ownership transfer had been agreed upon with Nintendo of America, who had been the principal owner since 1992, selling its majority shares to a group of minority shareholders led by Stanton, who replaces longtime CEO Howard Lincoln. The sale was officially approved in August by the MLB owners. Stanton has said that he expects the Mariners payroll to continue to go up as it has the past three years.

HOPEFUL SIGN The Mariners' minor-league system, under the leadership of new director of player development Andy McKay, placed an emphasis on a culture of winning. They made it a priority to win games and reach the postseason. The seven minor-league affiliates went a combined 451–313, with every team finishing .500 or better and qualifying for the postseason. Since 2005, the Mariners are only the third organization to have seven teams reach the postseason.

WE ARE THE WORLD The organization is prepared to have a multitude of players exit spring training to participate in the World Baseball Classic. Felix Hernandez will participate for Venezuela and was even allowed to pitch in the Venezuelan winter league to prepare. Robinson Cano and Nelson Cruz are confirmed to be playing for the Dominican Republic — the reigning WBC champions. Lefty James Paxton is slated to be the No. 1 starter for Canada, while Seattle's top prospect, outfielder Tyler O'Neill, will also join him on the team. Closer Edwin Diaz will pitch for Puerto Rico, and first baseman Danny Valencia will represent Israel. Pitcher Hisashi Iwakuma and third baseman Kyle Seager are also possible candidates to play for Japan and the U.S., respectively.

Tom DiPace

MARINERS ROSTER

General Manager: Jerry Dipoto **Manager:** Scott Servais **Coaches:** Manny Acta (third base), Tim Bogar (bench), Scott Brosius (assistant), Casey Candaele (first base), Mike Hampton (bullpen), Edgar Martinez (hitting), Chris Prieto (special projects), Mel Stottlemyre (pitching)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
53	Dan Altavilla	R-R	5-11	200	9/8/92	**SEATTLE**	**0-0**	**0.73**	**15**	**0**	**0**	**12.1**	**11**	**1**	**10**
						Jackson (AA)	7-3	1.91	43	0	16	56.2	40	22	65
49	Jonathan Aro	R-R	6-0	235	10/10/90	**SEATTLE**	**0-0**	**0.00**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0.2**	**1**	**1**	**0**
						Tacoma (AAA)	3-2	2.48	24	1	1	36.1	29	10	25
31	Steve Cishek	R-R	6-6	215	6/18/86	**SEATTLE**	**4-6**	**2.81**	**62**	**0**	**25**	**64.0**	**44**	**21**	**76**
	Zac Curtis	L-L	5-9	190	7/4/92	**ARIZONA**	**0-1**	**6.75**	**21**	**0**	**0**	**13.1**	**13**	**13**	**10**
						Mobile (AA)	0-1	3.20	19	0	4	19.2	17	6	30
						Visalia (A)	1-0	5.23	8	0	2	10.1	12	5	22
39	Edwin Diaz	R-R	6-3	165	3/22/94	**SEATTLE**	**0-4**	**2.79**	**49**	**0**	**18**	**51.2**	**45**	**15**	**88**
						Jackson (AA)	3-3	2.21	16	6	1	40.2	32	7	54
	Casey Fien	R-R	6-2	210	10/21/83	**MINNESOTA**	**1-0**	**7.90**	**14**	**0**	**0**	**13.2**	**21**	**3**	**12**
						LOS ANGELES NL	**0-1**	**4.21**	**25**	**0**	**0**	**25.2**	**24**	**7**	**23**
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	1-0	4.35	8	0	1	10.1	11	2	13
	Paul Fry	L-L	6-0	190	7/26/92	Tacoma (AAA)	3-1	2.78	48	1	0	55.0	48	31	65
34	Felix Hernandez	R-R	6-3	225	4/8/86	**SEATTLE**	**11-8**	**3.82**	**25**	**25**	**0**	**153.1**	**138**	**65**	**122**
	Chris Heston	R-R	6-3	195	4/10/88	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**1-1**	**10.80**	**4**	**0**	**0**	**5.0**	**9**	**6**	**3**
						Sacramento (AAA)	2-9	4.54	15	14	1	81.1	82	32	53
18	Hisashi Iwakuma	R-R	6-3	210	4/12/81	**SEATTLE**	**16-12**	**4.12**	**33**	**33**	**0**	**199.0**	**218**	**46**	**147**
13	Nathan Karns	R-R	6-3	225	11/25/87	**SEATTLE**	**6-2**	**5.15**	**22**	**15**	**1**	**94.1**	**95**	**45**	**101**
57	Cody Martin	R-R	6-3	230	9/4/89	**SEATTLE**	**1-2**	**3.86**	**9**	**2**	**0**	**25.2**	**28**	**9**	**15**
						Tacoma (AAA)	10-7	3.62	25	20	0	114.1	106	33	114
37	Ariel Miranda	L-L	6-2	190	1/10/89	**SEATTLE**	**5-2**	**3.54**	**11**	**10**	**0**	**56.0**	**43**	**18**	**40**
						BALTIMORE	**0-0**	**13.50**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**2.0**	**4**	**0**	**4**
						Norfolk (AAA)	4-7	3.93	19	19	0	100.2	95	31	87
65	James Paxton	L-L	6-4	235	11/6/88	**SEATTLE**	**6-7**	**3.79**	**20**	**20**	**0**	**121.0**	**134**	**24**	**117**
						Tacoma (AAA)	4-3	3.73	11	11	0	50.2	43	15	53
	James Pazos	R-L	6-2	235	5/5/91	**NEW YORK AL**	**1-0**	**13.50**	**7**	**0**	**0**	**3.1**	**7**	**1**	**3**
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	2-2	2.63	23	0	1	27.1	19	19	41
						Staten Island (A)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	3.2	3	1	6
	Marc Rzepczynski	L-L	6-2	220	8/29/85	**OAKLAND**	**1-0**	**3.00**	**56**	**0**	**0**	**36.0**	**38**	**24**	**37**
						WASHINGTON	**0-0**	**1.54**	**14**	**0**	**0**	**11.2**	**8**	**5**	**9**
58	Evan Scribner	R-R	6-3	190	7/19/85	**SEATTLE**	**0-0**	**0.00**	**12**	**0**	**0**	**14.0**	**5**	**2**	**15**
	Thyago Vieira	R-R	6-2	210	7/1/93	Bakersfield (A)	1-0	2.84	34	0	8	44.1	37	18	53
50	Nick Vincent	R-R	6-0	185	7/12/86	**SEATTLE**	**4-4**	**3.73**	**60**	**0**	**3**	**60.1**	**53**	**15**	**65**
	Rob Whalen	R-R	6-2	220	1/31/94	**ATLANTA**	**1-2**	**6.57**	**5**	**5**	**0**	**24.2**	**20**	**12**	**25**
						Gwinnett (AAA)	0-1	1.93	3	3	0	18.2	12	7	18
						Mississippi (AA)	7-5	2.49	18	18	0	101.1	87	37	94
55	Tony Zych	R-R	6-3	190	8/7/90	**SEATTLE**	**1-0**	**3.29**	**12**	**0**	**0**	**13.2**	**10**	**10**	**21**

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	Carlos Ruiz	R-R	5-10	215	1/22/79	**PHILADELPHIA**	**.261**	**48**	**165**	**18**	**43**	**3**	**12**	**24**	**28**	**3**
						LOS ANGELES NL	**.278**	**14**	**36**	**3**	**10**	**0**	**3**	**3**	**5**	**0**
2	Jesus Sucre	R-R	6-0	225	4/30/88	**SEATTLE**	**.480**	**9**	**25**	**4**	**12**	**1**	**5**	**2**	**5**	**0**
						Tacoma (AAA)	.273	29	99	7	27	0	11	3	15	0
						AZL Mariners (R)	.400	4	10	1	4	0	3	0	1	0
3	Mike Zunino	R-R	6-2	220	3/25/91	**SEATTLE**	**.207**	**55**	**164**	**16**	**34**	**12**	**31**	**21**	**65**	**0**
						Tacoma (AAA)	.286	79	280	47	80	17	57	35	69	0

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
22	Robinson Cano	L-R	6-0	210	10/22/82	**SEATTLE**	**.298**	**161**	**655**	**107**	**195**	**39**	**103**	**47**	**100**	**0**
6	Mike Freeman	L-R	6-0	190	8/4/87	**SEATTLE**	**.385**	**13**	**13**	**1**	**5**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**2**	**0**
						Tacoma (AAA)	.305	26	105	15	32	3	15	13	19	1
						ARIZONA	**.000**	**8**	**9**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**2**	**5**	**0**
						Reno (AAA)	.317	88	341	56	108	1	24	38	75	11
	Taylor Motter	R-R	6-1	195	9/18/89	**TAMPA BAY**	**.188**	**33**	**80**	**11**	**15**	**2**	**9**	**11**	**19**	**0**
						Durham (AAA)	.229	88	350	44	80	13	46	33	65	19
36	Shawn O'Malley	S-R	5-11	175	12/28/87	**SEATTLE**	**.229**	**89**	**210**	**24**	**48**	**2**	**17**	**18**	**59**	**6**
						Tacoma (AAA)	.317	25	82	15	26	1	13	13	18	5
	D.J. Peterson	R-R	6-1	210	12/31/91	Tacoma (AAA)	.253	46	178	26	45	8	35	11	51	0
						Jackson (AA)	.271	73	277	31	75	11	43	27	68	1
15	Kyle Seager	L-R	6-0	210	11/3/87	**SEATTLE**	**.278**	**158**	**597**	**89**	**166**	**30**	**99**	**69**	**108**	**3**
	Jean Segura	R-R	5-10	205	3/17/90	**ARIZONA**	**.319**	**153**	**637**	**102**	**203**	**20**	**64**	**39**	**101**	**33**
	Danny Valencia	R-R	6-2	210	9/19/84	**OAKLAND**	**.287**	**130**	**471**	**72**	**135**	**17**	**51**	**41**	**115**	**1**
20	Daniel Vogelbach	L-R	6-0	250	12/17/92	**SEATTLE**	**.083**	**8**	**12**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**6**	**0**
						Tacoma (AAA)	.240	44	154	26	37	7	32	42	34	0
						Iowa (AAA)	.318	89	305	53	97	16	64	55	67	0

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
23	Nelson Cruz	R-R	6-2	230	7/1/80	**SEATTLE**	**.287**	**155**	**589**	**96**	**169**	**43**	**105**	**62**	**159**	**2**
16	Ben Gamel	L-L	5-11	185	5/17/92	**SEATTLE**	**.200**	**27**	**40**	**8**	**8**	**1**	**5**	**5**	**15**	**0**
						NEW YORK AL	**.125**	**6**	**8**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**1**	**0**
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	.308	116	483	80	149	6	51	43	94	19
	Mitch Haniger	R-R	6-2	215	12/23/90	**ARIZONA**	**.229**	**34**	**109**	**9**	**25**	**5**	**17**	**12**	**27**	**0**
						Reno (AAA)	.341	74	261	58	89	20	64	39	62	8
						Mobile (AA)	.294	55	197	21	58	5	30	30	37	4
5	Guillermo Heredia	R-L	5-10	180	1/31/91	**SEATTLE**	**.250**	**45**	**92**	**12**	**23**	**1**	**12**	**12**	**15**	**1**
						Tacoma (AAA)	.312	35	138	27	43	2	13	12	15	3
						Jackson (AA)	.293	58	205	39	60	2	34	36	32	2
12	Leonys Martin	L-R	6-2	200	3/6/88	**SEATTLE**	**.247**	**143**	**518**	**72**	**128**	**15**	**47**	**44**	**149**	**24**
40	Boog Powell	L-L	5-10	185	1/14/93	Tacoma (AAA)	.270	64	248	39	67	3	27	22	42	10
7	Seth Smith	L-L	6-3	210	9/30/82	**SEATTLE**	**.249**	**137**	**378**	**62**	**94**	**16**	**63**	**48**	**89**	**0**

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

KYLE LEWIS, OF

The Mariners felt they got a steal when Lewis fell to the No. 11 pick. Projected as a possible No. 1 overall pick, Lewis won the Golden Spikes Award as the top player in NCAA baseball in 2016 with Mercer. Lewis signed his contract the day after being selected and quickly reported to the Mariners minor-league system. After a slow start with short-season Everett, Lewis adjusted to his new surroundings and was hitting .364 with a 1.114 OPS over his last 20 games. But his season ended with a sliding collision at home plate on July 19. Lewis suffered a ghastly knee injury, tearing his anterior cruciate ligament as well as the medial and lateral meniscus in his right knee. He finished the season with a slash line of .299/.385/.530 with three homers and 26 RBIs in 30 games. Lewis had surgery and has been rehabbing at the Mariners facility in Peoria, Ariz. He's expected to be back on the field in June.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Tyler O'Neill, OF (21) Even as one of the youngest players in the Double-A Southern League, he won the MVP, hitting .293 with 24 homers and 102 RBIs.

2. Kyle Lewis, OF (21) Before a knee injury ended his season, he was playing himself into a possible promotion from his short-season squad to the High-A level.

3. Mitch Haniger, OF (26) Acquired in an offseason trade, he was the Diamondbacks' 2016 Minor League Player of the Year, hitting .321 with a .999 OPS combined between Double-A and Triple-A.

4. Luiz Gohara, LHP (20) Still considered a promising prospect with a blazing fastball, he's also started showing some maturity in his preparation.

5. Nick Neidert, RHP (20) His first full-season stint was a success with a 7–3 record and 2.57 ERA in 19 starts at Class A Clinton.

6. Ryan Yarbrough, LHP (25) Healthy for a full season, he dominated the Southern League, earning Pitcher of the Year honors with a 12–4 record and 2.95 ERA in 25 starts.

7. Andrew Moore, RHP (22) Went 9–3 with a 3.16 ERA with a 4.78 strikeout-to-walk ratio in 19 starts in the Southern League.

8. Max Povse, RHP (23) The 6'8" starter has a sinking fastball that helped him go 4–1 with a 2.93 ERA in 11 starts at Double-A.

9. Daniel Vogelbach, 1B (24) A power-hitting lefty with an advanced knowledge of the strike zone, he's slated to be the Mariners' first baseman in 2017.

10. Drew Jackson, SS (23) The move up to the High-A level brought some struggles at the plate with a .658 OPS in 124 games.

TEXAS RANGERS

The good news for the Texas Rangers the past two seasons, of course, is that they won the American League West. Some might say they did so unexpectedly, even in 2016 as the defending division champs. Their playoff experience, though, has been a disappointment, with consecutive losses to the Toronto Blue Jays in the division series. In 2016, the Rangers were barely competitive in a three-game sweep.

Here the Rangers are again, being doubted. They no doubt have their flaws but are also a better team than they were a year ago.

ROTATION Cole Hamels was a Cy Young contender in his first full season with the Rangers before a subpar September. The lefthander issued more walks and home runs than he deems acceptable but pitched well with runners in scoring position. Yu Darvish will be in his first full season after Tommy John surgery, and the Rangers expect the traditional jump that comes 18-plus months after the procedure. The righthander saw a jump in fastball velocity and again showed he could dominate with a wipeout slider. Lefty Martin Perez was inconsistent but durable, and he pitched well down the stretch. Andrew Cashner signed a one-year, $10 million contract in November after recording a 5.25 ERA in stops in San Diego and Miami in 2016. The Rangers believe he will blossom working with pitching coach Doug Brocail. They could add another starter before spring training but might have to look internally for the final piece to the rotation. A.J. Griffin would be a strong candidate after making 23 starts last season, albeit with a 5.07 ERA. Chi Chi Gonzalez and Nick Martinez have pitched in the majors, including so-so showings in 2016. Waiver claim Tyler Wagner and Rule 5 Draft pick Mike Hauschild, both righties, are also possibilities.

BULLPEN Sam Dyson will open as the Rangers' fourth different closer in the past four seasons after taking over the spot in May. Dyson saved 38 games, using an upper-90s sinker and improved changeup as an effective two-pitch combo. If he struggles, Matt Bush could be next in line. Bush missed several seasons while in prison for a drunk-driving incident that nearly killed a motorcyclist. He has hit 100 mph, and his slider and curveball are also out pitches. Another bullpen bright spot was Tony Barnette, who became a steady middle-innings reliever. He was a closer in Japan, and it showed often as he was unfazed by high-leverage opportunities. Jeremy Jeffress is another potential closer-in-waiting after being acquired at the trade deadline. He was Milwaukee's closer but assumed a prominent setup role after the deal. Lefty Jake Diekman and righty Keone Kela had down years after solidifying the bullpen in 2015. Both have fastballs that sit in the mid-90s with quality sliders. Diekman lost his command late in the season and lost his spot in the bullpen pecking order. Kela needed early season surgery on his elbow and upon returning wasn't as sharp as he was in 2015. The final spot in the bullpen is Alex Claudio's to lose after a breakout season as a long reliever.

MIDDLE INFIELD Shortstop Elvis Andrus is coming off a career year, and fellow Venezuelan Rougned Odor had a season that put him in the upper echelon of offensive second basemen. Andrus finished with a team-best .302 average, the first .300 season of his career, and posted career highs in on-base percentage (.362), slugging percentage (.439), homers (eight) and RBIs (69) while stealing at least 20 bases (24) for the eighth time in his eight big-league seasons. His defense was improved, too. Odor has room to grow defensively. If he develops at the plate, the Rangers could be looking at a perennial All-Star. Odor, 23, launched a team-best 33 homers and batted .271 after flirting with .300 for much of the season.

CORNERS Third base is a sure thing, but the corner opposite from Adrian Beltre could be in flux all season. Beltre enjoyed a rebound that saw him top 30 homers (32) for the first time since 2013 and 100 RBIs (104) for the first time since 2012. He capped the year with his fifth career Gold Glove. Beltre, who will top 3,000 career hits this season, is well on his way to the Hall of Fame. Four players figure to play first base at some point in 2017 after Gold Glove-winner Mitch Moreland left for Boston via free agency. Ryan Rua, Jurickson Profar, Joey Gallo and Jonathan Lucroy (primarily a catcher) could all log time at first. None has the experience or glove of Moreland, but combined they could surpass his offensive output.

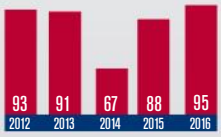
OUTFIELD When it came to addressing a need in center field, the Rangers went with affordability and defense in choosing to re-sign Carlos Gomez on a one-year, $11.5 million deal instead of Ian Desmond. Gomez was signed off the trash heap in August following his release from Houston, and he was arguably the Rangers' best player down the stretch as their left fielder and leadoff hitter. Desmond had an All-Star season, and he cashed it into a five-year, $70 million deal with Colorado. The Rangers aren't sure how the rest of the outfield will line up, though

2017 PREDICTION
2nd
AL West

2016 RECORD
95-67

HOME: 53-28 **ROAD:** 42-39

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

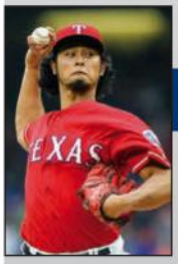


TEAM INFO

GLOBE LIFE PARK IN ARLINGTON

Opened: 1994 **Capacity:** 48,114
Left: 332' **Center:** 400' **Right:** 325'
Tickets: 817-273-5222
texas.rangers.mlb.com

➤ FANTASY TICKER



BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
C Jonathan Lucroy

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
RHP Yu Darvish

BULL MARKET
OF Nomar Mazara

BEAR MARKET
DH/1B/3B Joey Gallo

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
OF Shin-Soo Choo

IPO LHP Yohander Mendez

FUTURES MARKET 1B Ronald Guzman

INSIDER TIP The closer's job will be positioned throughout the spring as a three-way rumble among Sam Dyson, Matt Bush and Jeremy Jeffress. Bank on Dyson keeping his job.

➤ STATLINE

CAREER SOs/9 IP AS A STARTER

1. Yu Darvish	**11.32**
2. Randy Johnson	10.59
3. Stephen Strasburg	10.56
4. Mark Prior	10.37
5. Kerry Wood	10.33

(min. 100 starts)

Beltre: Tom DiPace; Darvish: AP Images

PROJECTED LINEUP

NEXT LEVEL

LINEUP

RF	Shin-Soo Choo (L)
DH	Jurickson Profar (S)
3B	Adrian Beltre (R)
2B	Rougned Odor (L)
C	Jonathan Lucroy (R)
CF	Carlos Gomez (R)
LF	**Nomar Mazara (L)**
1B	Ryan Rua (R)
SS	Elvis Andrus (R)

BENCH

C	**Robinson Chirinos (R)**
OF	Delino DeShields (R)
INF	Hanser Alberto (R)
UT	Drew Robinson (L)

ROTATION

LHP	Cole Hamels
RHP	Yu Darvish
LHP	**Martin Perez**
RHP	Andrew Cashner
RHP	Nick Martinez

BULLPEN

RHP	Sam Dyson (Closer)
RHP	**Matt Bush**
RHP	Jeremy Jeffress
LHP	Jake Diekman
RHP	Tony Barnette
RHP	Keone Kela
LHP	Alex Claudio

Opposing pitchers seemed to figure out Nomar Mazara. In the first half of his rookie season, he hit .282 with a 15.8 percent strikeout rate, while he hit .242 with a 25.4 percent strikeout rate in the second half.

Robinson Chirinos had a .259 isolated slugging percentage in 147 ABs, which would have been 13th in baseball had he qualified.

Martin Perez's 12.1 percent strikeout rate was the lowest in baseball among qualified starters despite a rise in average fastball velocity in the last two seasons from 90.3 to 91.8 to 92.7 mph.

Matt Bush's average fastball velocity of 97.0 mph ranked fifth among relievers with at least 60 innings.

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE RANGERS

"Starting pitching is their big question, after Cole Hamels and Yu Darvish. I think Andrew Cashner has a lot to prove, and he was worth the $10 million gamble. They've got some great arms in the bullpen, but the best belongs to Matt Bush. You wonder if you can ever trust him, but he should take over the closer job from Sam Dyson because his stuff is better — by a lot. Joey Gallo's got to learn to lay off the high fastball. That's where pitchers constantly beat him. Losing Ian Desmond's a problem, and they'll miss Mitch Moreland more than you'd think, because he was so good on defense. But having Jonathan Lucroy for a full year is a big plus, and who doesn't love the left side of that infield, with Adrian Beltre and Elvis Andrus? They've got to get Shin-Soo Choo healthy, but Nomar Mazara should be a stable piece here for a long time."

STATISTICIAN

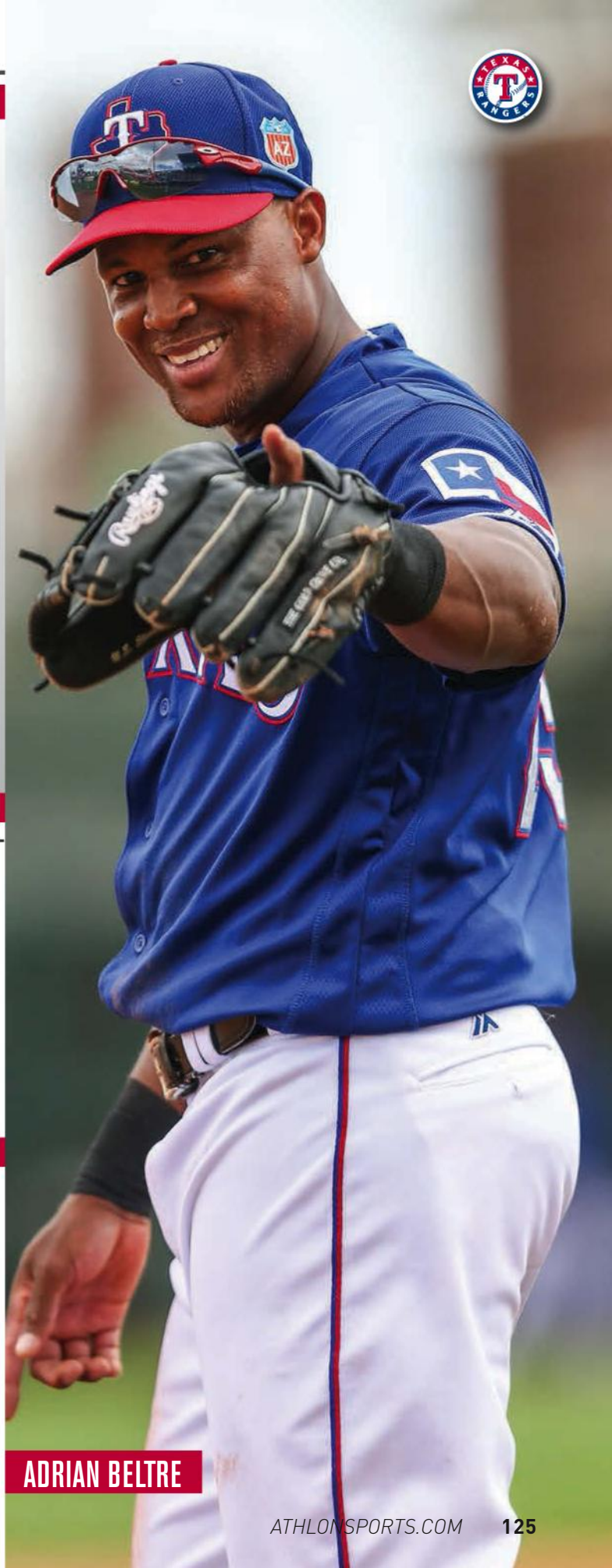
.984 Rangers' fielding percentage in 2016. Oddly, it ranked only 11th out of 15 in the AL but rates as the fifth-best mark in club history.

4 Outs shy of 200 innings pitched by Martin Perez, whose 198.2 innings were a career high that he accomplished in his first full season after Tommy John surgery.

13.94 ERA by the rotation of Cole Hamels, Yu Darvish and Colby Lewis in a three-game sweep by Toronto in the American League Division Series.

15 Wins, against four losses, over division rival Houston. The Rangers have gone 28–10 against the Astros the past two seasons en route to two division titles.

36 Victories in one-run games, against 11 losses, in 2016. The .766 winning percentage in one-run games is the highest in baseball's modern era, which dates to 1901.



ADRIAN BELTRE

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3 CLE	4 CLE	5 CLE	6	7 OAK	8 OAK
9 OAK	10	11 LAA	12 LAA	13 LAA	14 SEA	15 SEA
16 SEA	17 OAK	18 OAK	19 OAK	20 KC	21 KC	22 KC
23 KC	24 MIN	25 MIN	26 MIN	27	28 LAA	29 LAA
30 LAA						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 HOU	2 HOU	3 HOU	4 HOU	5 SEA	6 SEA
7 SEA	8 SD	9 SD	10 SD	11 SD	12 OAK	13 OAK
14 OAK	15	16 PHI	17 PHI	18 PHI	19 DET	20 DET
21 DET	22	23 BOS	24 BOS	25 BOS	26 TOR	27 TOR
28 TOR	29 TB	30 TB	31 TB			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2 HOU	3 HOU
4 HOU	5	6 NYM	7 NYM	8	9 WAS	10 WAS
11 WAS	12 HOU	13 HOU	14 HOU	15	16 SEA	17 SEA
18 SEA	19 TOR	20 TOR	21 TOR	22 TOR	23 NYY	24 NYY
25 NYY	26 CLE	27 CLE	28 CLE	29 CLE	30 CWS	

July

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 CWS
2 CWS	3 BOS	4 BOS	5 BOS	6	7 LAA	8 LAA
9 LAA	10	11	12	13	14 KC	15 KC
16 KC	17 BAL	18 BAL	19 BAL	20 BAL	21 TB	22 TB
23 TB	24 MIA	25 MIA	26 MIA	27	28 BAL	29 BAL
30 BAL	31 SEA					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 SEA	2 SEA	3 MIN	4 MIN	5 MIN
6 MIN	7	8 NYM	9 NYM	10	11 HOU	12 HOU
13 HOU	14 DET	15 DET	16 DET	17 CWS	18 CWS	19 CWS
20 CWS	21 LAA	22 LAA	23 LAA	24 LAA	25 OAK	26 OAK
27 OAK	28	29 HOU	30 HOU	31 HOU		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 LAA	2 LAA
3 LAA	4 ATL	5 ATL	6 ATL	7	8 NYY	9 NYY
10 NYY	11 SEA	12 SEA	13 SEA	14 SEA	15 LAA	16 LAA
17 LAA	18	19 SEA	20 SEA	21 SEA	22 OAK	23 OAK
24 OAK	25 HOU	26 HOU	27 HOU	28 OAK	29 OAK	30 OAK
1 OAK						

ROUGNED ODOR

the best bet is Nomar Mazara in left field after a standout rookie season with Shin-Soo Choo in right after an injury-marred season. Mazara's average cooled to .266 after a hot start while replacing Choo during the first of four DL stints. Mazara popped 20 homers, but the left-handed hitter needs to be better against southpaws. If Choo is healthy, he can be a force from the leadoff spot.

CATCHING Lucroy was acquired from Milwaukee at the trade deadline and became the Rangers' best catcher since Ivan Rodriguez. No one outworks Lucroy in the video room as he formulates a scouting report for each game, and he knows how to manage pitchers. His framing skills are enviable and have been copied by many. His throwing can help shut down running games. Lucroy isn't just defensive-minded. He swatted a career-high 24 homers, 11 in 47 games after the trade.

DH/BENCH The Rangers are considering not having a full-time designated hitter but instead rotating several players at the spot. In theory, that would keep players healthy while keeping Profar and Rua in the lineup regularly. A bench of catcher Robinson Chirinos, Delino DeShields as an extra outfielder and infielders Hanser Alberto and Drew Robinson offers speed and defensive flexibility.

MANAGEMENT Jeff Banister returns for his third season along with the 2016 coaching staff, except for field coordinator Jayce Tingler, who took over as farm director. Tingler was replaced by Josh Bonifay. Tony Beasley is expected back full time as third-base coach after being declared cancer-free in December. GM Jon Daniels enters his 12th season and has shown no hesitancy in trying to upgrade the roster at the trade deadline.

FINAL ANALYSIS A third-straight AL West title is within reach. The Rangers have two aces in the rotation, a top-flight bullpen and offensive firepower. That combination will help them stay in contention in the AL West, but the rest of the rotation needs to carry its weight. Choo and Beltre must stay healthy, and first base and DH must be productive to make a push for a three-peat.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

NEW HOME Globe Life Park has as few as three seasons left before the Rangers vacate it for a new ballpark with a retractable roof. Voters in Arlington overwhelmingly approved a measure that extends the tax that was used to pay for AT&T Stadium, home of the Dallas Cowboys. Globe Life opened in 1994, and many citizens wondered if there was a need for a new ballpark. But with the threat of the city of Dallas luring the team away with a roofed ballpark, the vote passed Nov. 8. Construction on the new ballpark could begin in June with the goal of being completed by Opening Day 2020.

FISTICUFFS Rougned Odor became known for his power last season, but on May 15 he became known for his right hook. Odor clocked six-time Toronto Blue Jays All-Star Jose Bautista in the eighth inning after Bautista's late, illegal slide into second base. Bautista — who had been hit by a Matt Bush fastball many believe was in retaliation for his bat flip in Game 5 of the 2015 ALDS — and Odor initially exchanged words, and Odor delivered a shove. Bautista appeared to be cocking his fist when Odor beat him to the punch. Benches cleared, and 14 players and coaches were fined or suspended. Odor served a seven-game suspension.

YOUNG AND PRODUCTIVE Elvis Andrus' 1,233 hits before turning 28 on Aug. 26 rank second in club history behind Ivan Rodriguez (1,333) and fourth among active players behind Miguel Cabrera (1,417), Albert Pujols (1,344) and teammate Adrian Beltre (1,270).

PICKING TEXAS Jonathan Lucroy was dealt to the Rangers just before the Aug. 1 trade deadline after he nixed a deal that would have sent him to Cleveland, a team on his limited no-trade list. Lucroy did so after a conversation with Indians management, who wouldn't guarantee him playing time at catcher in 2017 in his final season before free agency. Lucroy lives in Louisiana and wanted to play closer to his wife and daughter. The decision cost him a chance to play in the World Series, but he doesn't regret it.

NO RAIN BUT NO GAME Despite the abundance of springtime thunderstorms in Arlington, the Rangers had a curious streak of 448 games without a rainout entering an April 17 game against Baltimore. But a forecast for constant showers on a getaway Sunday led to the postponement well before first pitch. However, the Rangers' first rainout since May 29, 2013, could have been avoided had the teams decided to go to the field. Conditions had cleared by game time.

AP Images

RANGERS ROSTER

General Manager: Jon Daniels **Manager:** Jeff Banister **Coaches:** Tony Beasley (third base), Doug Brocail (pitching), Steve Buechele (bench), Brad Holman (bullpen), Anthony Iapoce (hitting), Justin Mashore (asst. hitting), Hector Ortiz (first base)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
39	Dario Alvarez	L-L	6-1	170	1/17/89	**TEXAS**	**0-0**	**7.71**	**10**	**0**	**0**	**11.2**	**17**	**2**	**13**
						Round Rock (AAA)	2-0	2.25	6	0	1	8.0	8	3	10
						ATLANTA	**3-1**	**3.00**	**16**	**0**	**0**	**15.0**	**11**	**5**	**28**
						Gwinnett (AAA)	0-0	1.13	8	0	0	8.0	4	4	14
						Las Vegas (AAA)	0-1	9.98	17	0	0	15.1	22	10	27
43	Tony Barnette	R-R	6-1	190	11/9/83	**TEXAS**	**7-3**	**2.09**	**53**	**0**	**0**	**60.1**	**54**	**16**	**49**
51	Matt Bush	R-R	5-9	180	2/8/86	**TEXAS**	**7-2**	**2.48**	**58**	**0**	**1**	**61.2**	**44**	**14**	**61**
						Frisco (AA)	0-2	2.65	12	0	5	17.0	9	4	18
	Andrew Cashner	R-R	6-6	235	9/11/86	**SAN DIEGO**	**4-7**	**4.76**	**16**	**16**	**0**	**79.1**	**80**	**30**	**67**
						MIAMI	**1-4**	**5.98**	**12**	**11**	**0**	**52.2**	**62**	**30**	**45**
58	Alex Claudio	L-L	6-3	180	1/31/92	**TEXAS**	**4-1**	**2.79**	**39**	**0**	**0**	**51.2**	**55**	**10**	**34**
						Round Rock (AAA)	0-0	0.55	6	0	1	16.1	7	4	8
11	Yu Darvish	R-R	6-5	220	8/16/86	**TEXAS**	**7-5**	**3.41**	**17**	**17**	**0**	**100.1**	**81**	**31**	**132**
						Round Rock (AAA)	0-1	2.57	2	2	0	7.0	3	3	7
						Frisco (AA)	1-1	2.25	5	5	0	20.0	14	7	24
41	Jake Diekman	L-L	6-4	200	1/21/87	**TEXAS**	**4-2**	**3.40**	**66**	**0**	**4**	**53.0**	**36**	**26**	**59**
	Brady Dragmire	R-R	6-1	185	2/5/93	New Hampshire (AA)	4-6	4.38	45	0	1	72.0	78	28	41
47	Sam Dyson	R-R	6-1	205	5/7/88	**TEXAS**	**3-2**	**2.43**	**73**	**0**	**38**	**70.1**	**63**	**23**	**55**
56	Andrew Faulkner	R-L	6-3	205	9/12/92	**TEXAS**	**0-0**	**6.75**	**9**	**0**	**0**	**6.2**	**8**	**4**	**1**
						Round Rock (AAA)	5-3	3.97	41	1	4	45.1	39	20	39
21	Chi Chi Gonzalez	R-R	6-3	215	1/15/92	**TEXAS**	**0-2**	**8.71**	**3**	**3**	**0**	**10.1**	**21**	**9**	**7**
						Round Rock (AAA)	8-10	4.70	25	24	0	138.0	154	44	91
64	A.J. Griffin	R-R	6-5	230	1/28/88	**TEXAS**	**7-4**	**5.07**	**23**	**23**	**0**	**119.0**	**116**	**46**	**107**
						Frisco (AA)	0-1	3.48	3	3	0	10.1	12	4	13
35	Cole Hamels	L-L	6-4	205	12/27/83	**TEXAS**	**15-5**	**3.32**	**32**	**32**	**0**	**200.2**	**185**	**77**	**200**
	Mike Hauschild	R-R	6-3	210	1/22/90	Fresno (AAA)	9-10	3.22	24	24	0	139.2	138	40	119
21	Jeremy Jeffress	R-R	6-0	205	9/21/87	**TEXAS**	**1-0**	**2.70**	**12**	**0**	**0**	**13.1**	**10**	**7**	**7**
						MILWAUKEE	**2-2**	**2.22**	**47**	**0**	**27**	**44.2**	**45**	**11**	**35**
50	Keone Kela	R-R	6-1	215	4/16/93	**TEXAS**	**5-1**	**6.09**	**35**	**0**	**0**	**34.0**	**30**	**17**	**45**
62	Jose Leclerc	R-R	6-0	190	12/19/93	**TEXAS**	**0-0**	**1.80**	**12**	**0**	**0**	**15.0**	**11**	**13**	**15**
						Round Rock (AAA)	2-2	2.72	29	0	1	43.0	23	28	50
						Frisco (AA)	0-5	3.52	10	2	1	23.0	17	10	28
22	Nick Martinez	L-R	6-1	200	8/5/90	**TEXAS**	**2-3**	**5.59**	**12**	**5**	**0**	**38.2**	**45**	**19**	**16**
						Round Rock (AAA)	7-6	3.91	18	16	0	99.0	109	17	67
65	Yohander Mendez	L-L	6-5	200	1/17/95	**TEXAS**	**0-0**	**18.00**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**3.0**	**5**	**2**	**0**
						Round Rock (AAA)	4-1	0.57	7	4	0	31.1	12	16	22
						Frisco (AA)	4-1	3.09	10	10	0	46.2	39	14	46
						High Desert (A)	4-1	2.45	7	7	0	33.0	21	11	45
33	Martin Perez	L-L	6-0	200	4/4/91	**TEXAS**	**10-11**	**4.39**	**33**	**33**	**0**	**198.2**	**205**	**76**	**103**
59	Connor Sadzeck	R-R	6-7	240	10/1/91	Frisco (AA)	10-8	4.16	25	23	0	140.2	127	52	133
52	Tanner Scheppers	R-R	6-4	200	1/17/87	**TEXAS**	**1-1**	**4.15**	**10**	**0**	**1**	**8.2**	**6**	**3**	**5**
						Round Rock (AAA)	0-0	0.00	6	1	0	6.0	4	2	6
						Frisco (AA)	0-0	4.50	2	1	0	2.0	2	1	1
	Tyler Wagner	R-R	6-3	205	1/24/91	**ARIZONA**	**1-0**	**1.80**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**10.0**	**9**	**2**	**7**
						Reno (AAA)	1-4	3.04	5	5	0	26.2	29	11	15

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
61	Robinson Chirinos	R-R	6-1	210	6/5/84	**TEXAS**	**.224**	**57**	**147**	**21**	**33**	**9**	**20**	**15**	**44**	**0**
						Round Rock (AAA)	.167	3	12	0	2	0	0	0	5	0
						Frisco (AA)	.000	3	9	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
25	Jonathan Lucroy	R-R	6-0	200	6/13/86	**TEXAS**	**.276**	**47**	**152**	**19**	**42**	**11**	**31**	**14**	**30**	**0**
						MILWAUKEE	**.299**	**95**	**338**	**48**	**101**	**13**	**50**	**33**	**70**	**5**
63	Brett Nicholas	L-R	6-2	220	7/18/88	TEXAS	.275	15	40	5	11	2	4	4	9	0
						Round Rock (AAA)	.288	101	400	57	115	13	58	38	88	2

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
68	Hanser Alberto	R-R	5-11	215	10/17/92	**TEXAS**	**.143**	**35**	**56**	**2**	**8**	**0**	**5**	**0**	**17**	**1**
						Round Rock (AAA)	.275	63	265	32	73	7	36	8	29	2
1	Elvis Andrus	R-R	6-0	200	8/26/88	**TEXAS**	**.302**	**147**	**506**	**75**	**153**	**8**	**69**	**47**	**70**	**24**
29	Adrian Beltre	R-R	5-11	220	4/7/79	**TEXAS**	**.300**	**153**	**583**	**89**	**175**	**32**	**104**	**48**	**66**	**1**
	Doug Bernier	R-R	6-1	185	6/24/80	Round Rock (AAA)	.275	120	414	56	114	10	47	45	97	7
84	Prince Fielder	L-R	5-11	275	5/9/84	**TEXAS**	**.212**	**89**	**326**	**29**	**69**	**8**	**44**	**32**	**63**	**0**
13	Joey Gallo	L-R	6-5	235	11/19/93	**TEXAS**	**.040**	**17**	**25**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**5**	**19**	**1**
						Round Rock (AAA)	.240	102	359	71	86	25	66	68	150	2
	Ronald Guzman	L-L	6-5	205	10/20/94	Round Rock (AAA)	.216	25	88	9	19	1	11	6	23	0
						Frisco (AA)	.288	102	375	51	108	15	56	33	82	2
	Will Middlebrooks	R-R	6-3	220	9/9/88	**MILWAUKEE**	**.111**	**10**	**27**	**2**	**3**	**0**	**1**	**4**	**13**	**0**
						Colo. Sprs. (AAA)	.282	68	248	38	70	10	47	9	59	1
						Wisconsin (A)	.286	2	7	0	2	0	1	0	2	0
12	Rougned Odor	L-R	5-11	195	2/3/94	**TEXAS**	**.271**	**150**	**605**	**89**	**164**	**33**	**88**	**19**	**135**	**14**
19	Jurickson Profar	S-R	6-0	190	2/20/93	**TEXAS**	**.239**	**90**	**272**	**35**	**65**	**5**	**20**	**30**	**61**	**2**
						Round Rock (AAA)	.284	42	169	28	48	5	26	16	26	4
16	Ryan Rua	R-R	6-2	205	3/11/90	**TEXAS**	**.258**	**99**	**240**	**40**	**62**	**8**	**22**	**21**	**76**	**9**
						Round Rock (AAA)	.500	4	14	2	7	1	2	2	2	0

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
17	Shin-Soo Choo	L-L	5-11	210	7/13/82	**TEXAS**	**.242**	**48**	**178**	**27**	**43**	**7**	**17**	**25**	**46**	**6**
						Round Rock (AAA)	.545	3	11	2	6	1	5	1	0	1
						Frisco (AA)	.300	6	20	0	6	0	0	3	7	0
3	Delino DeShields	R-R	5-9	200	8/16/92	**TEXAS**	**.209**	**74**	**182**	**36**	**38**	**4**	**13**	**15**	**54**	**8**
						Round Rock (AAA)	.261	54	207	37	54	3	17	35	60	21
14	Carlos Gomez	R-R	6-3	220	12/4/85	**TEXAS**	**.284**	**33**	**116**	**18**	**33**	**8**	**24**	**13**	**36**	**5**
						Round Rock (AAA)	.308	3	13	1	4	0	2	0	5	0
						HOUSTON	**.210**	**85**	**295**	**27**	**62**	**5**	**29**	**21**	**100**	**13**
						Corpus Christi (AA)	.250	5	20	3	5	1	1	0	6	0
30	Nomar Mazara	L-L	6-4	215	4/26/95	**TEXAS**	**.266**	**145**	**516**	**59**	**137**	**20**	**64**	**39**	**112**	**0**
						Round Rock (AAA)	.500	3	12	4	6	1	4	1	1	0
	Drew Robinson	L-R	6-1	200	4/20/92	Round Rock (AAA)	.257	125	467	76	120	20	67	66	148	17

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

COLE RAGANS, LHP

If the Rangers drafted another Cole Hamels with the 30th overall pick in the 2016 draft, look out. At the very least, they drafted a lefthander named Cole who has tried to emulate the Rangers' ace. Ragans wasn't bashful about his adulation of Hamels, a 2016 All-Star in his first full season with the Rangers. Ragans went 9–2 with a 0.90 ERA and 104 strikeouts in 90 innings as a senior at North Florida Christian School in Tallahassee, Fla. His fastball has topped out at 95 mph though usually sits between 90-93 mph, and his changeup could become his best pitch. He also throws a curveball that could develop into an above-average pitch. All he needs now to just be like Hamels is a cutter and a slider, and maybe a few more mph and big-game mettle.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Leody Taveras, OF (18) Switch-hitter from the Dominican Republic has all the tools and plays with a confidence that belies his age.

2. Yohander Mendez, LHP (22) Durability concerns were wiped clean after a four-level campaign in 2016 that ended in the majors. This Venezuelan's changeup can be devastating, but he needs better command of his fastball.

3. Ariel Jurado, RHP (21) Nothing about his stuff wows, but the Panamanian throws a heavy sinker that produces ample ground balls. He is a strike thrower but needs a better off-speed pitch.

4. Cole Ragans, LHP (19) The Rangers' 2016 first-round pick will open 2017 at Low-A.

5. Andy Ibanez, 2B (24) The former star in Cuba's junior leagues and a member of the 2013 WBC team can flat out hit. He has a quick stroke and is a gap-to-gap hitter.

6. Brett Martin, LHP (21) An elbow injury that did not require surgery set Martin back, but he rebounded in the California League playoffs and Arizona Fall League. He's a big, projectable lefty.

7. Ronald Guzman, 1B (22) Signed the same day as friend Nomar Mazara, Guzman is growing into his 6'6" frame and moving up the prospect rankings.

8. Alex Speas, RHP (19) Speas is raw but has a fastball that tops out at 99 mph and a slider that could develop into his best pitch.

9. Josh Morgan, 3B (21) The versatile Morgan might eventually be a catcher. He stuck in the infield in 2016 and batted .300 with 28 extra-base hits.

10. Jose Trevino, C (24) The top defensive catcher in the minor leagues will be a big-leaguer some day. His bat has some decent pop, and his work ethic knows no end.

ATHLON SPORTS

NATIONAL LEAGUE PREDICTIONS

PREDICTIONS

NL EAST

1. Washington Nationals
2. New York Mets
3. Miami Marlins
4. Philadelphia Phillies
5. Atlanta Braves

NL CENTRAL

1. Chicago Cubs
2. St. Louis Cardinals*
3. Pittsburgh Pirates
4. Cincinnati Reds
5. Milwaukee Brewers

NL WEST

1. Los Angeles Dodgers
2. San Francisco Giants*
3. Colorado Rockies
4. Arizona Diamondbacks
5. San Diego Padres

*Wild Card

NLCS

CHICAGO CUBS OVER
LOS ANGELES DODGERS

WORLD SERIES

CHICAGO CUBS OVER
BOSTON RED SOX

Cubs: AP Images; Harper: Tom DiPace

NL MVP

1. Bryce Harper, OF, Washington Nationals
2. Kris Bryant, 3B, Chicago Cubs
3. Joey Votto, 1B, Cincinnati Reds
4. Paul Goldschmidt, 1B, Arizona Diamondbacks
5. Clayton Kershaw, LHP, Los Angeles Dodgers
6. Nolan Arenado, 3B, Colorado Rockies
7. Anthony Rizzo, 1B, Chicago Cubs
8. Buster Posey, C, San Francisco Giants
9. Noah Syndergaard, RHP, New York Mets
10. Max Scherzer, RHP, Washington Nationals

NL CY YOUNG

1. Clayton Kershaw, LHP, Los Angeles Dodgers
2. Noah Syndergaard, RHP, New York Mets
3. Max Scherzer, RHP, Washington Nationals
4. Madison Bumgarner, LHP, San Francisco Giants
5. Jake Arrieta, RHP, Chicago Cubs

NL ROOKIE OF THE YEAR

1. Dansby Swanson, SS, Atlanta Braves
2. Alex Reyes, RHP, St. Louis Cardinals
3. Manuel Margot, OF, San Diego Padres
4. Josh Bell, 1B, Pittsburgh Pirates
5. Tyler Glasnow, RHP, Pittsburgh Pirates

ATLANTA BRAVES

And so, the awkward adolescent phase begins. Following the 2015 season, the Braves began trading away veterans in earnest for what they would bring back in prospects, leaving the major-league roster to be staffed by Freddie Freeman and whoever else happened to be left over. The good news is that those trades have left the Braves with a farm system considered one of the best in the game.

The Braves are following a rebuilding plan that's been used countless times. Sometimes it even works. But now that the dust has settled and the fans saw what occurred in all of those trades, the hard work of turning "the kids" into actual big-league contributors begins. It's baseball's version of adolescence with all of the awkwardness that goes with it. In 2017, the Braves are likely to show flashes of what they may become, but those will be sandwiched between plenty of moments when fans will be mumbling, "I thought he was supposed to be good."

But they will play in a new stadium!

ROTATION There are 1,458 innings (at least) to cover in 162 games, and someone has to pitch them. So, the Braves made a trio of strategic offseason moves in their rotation, signing one-year deals with 42-year-old knuckleballer R.A. Dickey and 44-year-old fastballer Bartolo Colon, and then trading for Jaime Garcia. The idea is to have these three join forces with 26-year-old staff ace Julio Teheran, who for the fourth straight year pitched 180 innings of very good baseball. It's shrewd business, because the Braves have been stockpiling pitching prospects. Rather than expose them to developing on the job in what might be another 90-loss team, the Braves can let guys like Sean Newcomb, Aaron Blair and Matt Wisler marinate a little more in Class AAA. If one of them is ready quicker than expected, the Braves have very little committed to their new arrivals and could easily clear a spot. At the trade deadline, if the Braves are out of contention, one or two of the veterans might even bring back a decent prospect.

BULLPEN The Braves wisely brought back reliever Jim Johnson, a veteran who stepped into the breach last year and saved 20 games. He'll serve as the mentor for a bullpen that features flamethrower Arodys Vizcaino, who began 2016 as the closer but got hurt. The rest of the bullpen might feature arms such as Jose Ramirez and Mauricio Cabrera trying to solve their problems with walking so many hitters on live television. The wild card might be lefty Ian Krol, whom the Braves got in a trade with the Tigers before the 2016 season. Krol's strikeout and walk numbers both dramatically improved upon donning a Braves uniform. To succeed, a rebuild needs a few "hidden" players who emerge into solid major leaguers. For Braves fans who want to know how the rebuild is going, watching whether Krol can hold on to his improvements will be a good indicator.

MIDDLE INFIELD How Braves general manager John Coppolella talked the Arizona Diamondbacks into giving up Dansby Swanson, a former No. 1 overall draft pick, in a trade for Shelby Miller remains one of the great mysteries of the universe. Swanson begins the year as the Braves' starting shortstop. He'll be joined by a rotating cast of filler options including Jace Peterson and Chase d'Arnaud, who will keep the other half of the keystone warm until prospect Ozzie Albies is ready.

CORNERS According to Baseball-Reference.com, Freeman was the 11th-most valuable position player in 2016 by their Wins Above Replacement metric, and the best among first basemen. Playing on a team that lost 93 games didn't do much for Freeman's national name recognition, but another season of 34 home runs and a .400 on-base percentage might do the trick no matter what the Braves do in 2017. One of the hardest parts of any rebuild is developing a bona fide superstar, but the Braves — who will employ Mr. Freeman through the 2021 season — already seem to have one. On the hot corner, Adonis Garcia did just enough to be useful in 2016, but he is not the long-term answer. The Braves are hoping that 23-year-old Rio Ruiz, who showed good on-base skills but limited power in AAA last year, is that answer, but it's not clear that he's ready for the jump to the big leagues.

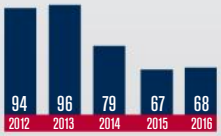
OUTFIELD The trade that brought Swanson also netted center fielder Ender Inciarte, who after being hurt at the beginning of the season returned to post a .351 on-base percentage and played Gold Glove defense. He'll be flanked in left by Matt Kemp, who has become a defensively challenged, one-dimensional hitter. His 35 home runs in 2016 may look gaudy, but it's not hard to find a power-hitting corner outfielder, and his other shortcomings erode the value that his power hitting brings. Nick Markakis has been exactly what the Braves had hoped he would be when he signed with the team prior to 2015: a solid player, but one for whom "solid" represents the highest praise he'll receive. Markakis' performance against lefties has begun to deteriorate, making him a possible candidate for platoon duty only.

2017 PREDICTION
5th
NL East

2016 RECORD
68-93

HOME: 31-50 **ROAD:** 37-43

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND



TEAM INFO

SunTrust Park
Opened: 2017 **Capacity:** 41,500
Left: 335' **Center:** 400' **Right:** 325'
Tickets: 404-522-7630
atlanta.braves.mlb.com

➤ FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
1B Freddie Freeman

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
RHP Julio Teheran

BULL MARKET
SS Dansby Swanson

BEAR MARKET
2B Jace Peterson

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
OF Mallex Smith

IPO 3B Rio Ruiz

FUTURES MARKET 2B Ozzie Albies

INSIDER TIP Only Aroldis Chapman throws consistently harder than Mauricio Cabrera. Pencil him as the Braves closer of the near future.

➤ STATLINE

FEWEST PITCHES PER BATTER: 2016

1. Jaime Garcia, Braves	**3.48**
2. Mike Leake, Cardinals	3.51
3. Hisashi Iwakuma, Mariners	3.57
4t. Kendall Graveman, A's	3.60
4t. Martin Perez, Rangers	3.60
4t. Josh Tomlin, Indians	3.60

Teheran: AP/Tomasso DeRosa; Swanson: Icon Sportswire via AP Images

PROJECTED LINEUP

NEXT LEVEL

LINEUP

CF	Ender Inciarte (L)
SS	Dansby Swanson (R)
1B	**Freddie Freeman (L)**
LF	Matt Kemp (R)
RF	Nick Markakis (L)
3B	Adonis Garcia (R)
C	Tyler Flowers (R)
2B	Jace Peterson (L)

Freddie Freeman drew hard contact on a league-leading 43.5 percent of hit balls in play, which is 3.7 points higher than his previous best. That helped contribute to his .302 batting average.

BENCH

C	**Anthony Recker (R)**
UT	Sean Rodriguez (R)
INF	Chase d'Arnaud (R)
3B	Rio Ruiz (L)
OF	Mallex Smith (L)

Anthony Recker's 94.2-mph average exit velocity was sixth best in the National League last season.

ROTATION

RHP	Julio Teheran
RHP	**Bartolo Colon**
LHP	Jaime Garcia
RHP	R.A. Dickey
RHP	Mike Foltynewicz

Bartolo Colon gave up contact on 88.2 percent of pitches opposing batters swung at, the highest mark among qualified pitchers and 10.0 points above the league average.

BULLPEN

RHP	Jim Johnson (Closer)
RHP	Arodys Vizcaino
LHP	Ian Krol
RHP	**Mauricio Cabrera**
RHP	Jose Ramirez
RHP	Josh Collmenter
RHP	Armando Rivero

Other than Aroldis Chapman, Mauricio Cabrera was the only pitcher to average over 100 mph on his fastball (100.1). He topped out at 103.8 mph and threw the 34 fastest non-Chapman pitches last year.

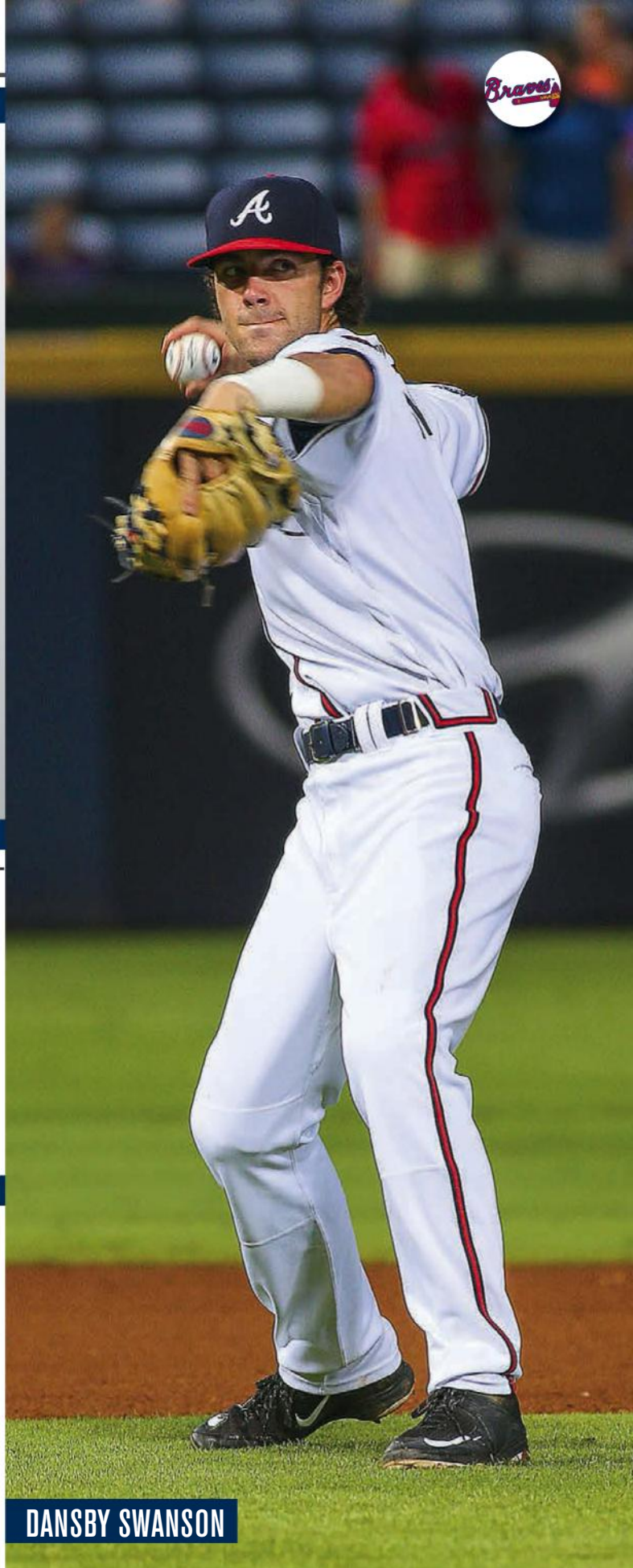
SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE BRAVES

"They're pushing the fast-forward button a little bit to be competitive at the new ballpark. With Bartolo Colon, R.A. Dickey and Jaime Garcia, they realized they could, at a reasonable cost, get a lot of innings eaten up by some veterans with know-how. There's risk in those guys holding up at their age, but Colon and Dickey have done it, and Julio Teheran is an anchor in his prime. I think Dansby Swanson has a real chance to be the Rookie of the Year, and Ender Inciarte is another strong everyday guy; it's still hard to fathom they got them both for Shelby Miller. I hear all the grumbling about Matt Kemp, but I don't care — that guy plays hard, and he's not a concern for me. Freddie Freeman is outstanding, a real cornerstone guy. They just need to get more around him and they'll be all right. By 2019 they will be real contenders."

STATISTICIAN

18	Intentional walks given to Freddie Freeman in 2016, second only to Bryce Harper in MLB.
122	Home runs hit by the Braves in 2016, the fewest in MLB.
89.5	Percentage of pitches thrown by Braves starter Bartolo Colon in 2016 that were fastballs.
5.32	Combined 2016 ERA of all Braves starters not named Julio Teheran.
35	Pitchers who appeared in a game for the Braves in 2016, the most in the majors.
427	Relief appearances by Braves pitchers, second most in the majors.
64	Sacrifice bunts in 2016 by the Braves (53 of them by pitchers), leading baseball.
145	Double plays the Braves hit into in 2016 (first in the NL).
20	Braves wins over their last 30 games of 2016.



DANSBY SWANSON

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3 NYM	4	5 NYM	6 NYM	7 PIT	8 PIT
9 PIT	10	11 MIA	12 MIA	13	14 SD	15 SD
16 SD	17 SD	18 WAS	19 WAS	20 WAS	21 PHI	22 PHI
23 PHI	24	25 NYM	26 NYM	27 NYM	28 MIL	29 MIL
30 MIL						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 NYM	2 NYM	3 NYM	4 NYM	5 STL	6 STL
7 STL	8	9 HOU	10 HOU	11	12 MIA	13 MIA
14 MIA	15 TOR	16 TOR	17 TOR	18 TOR	19 WAS	20 WAS
21 WAS	22 PIT	23 PIT	24 PIT	25 PIT	26 SF	27 SF
28 SF	29 LAA	30 LAA	31 LAA			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2 CIN	3 CIN
4 CIN	5 PHI	6 PHI	7 PHI	8 PHI	9 NYM	10 NYM
11 NYM	12 WAS	13 WAS	14 WAS	15	16 MIA	17 MIA
18 MIA	19 SF	20 SF	21 SF	22 SF	23 MIL	24 MIL
25 MIL	26	27 SD	28 SD	29 SD	30 OAK	

July

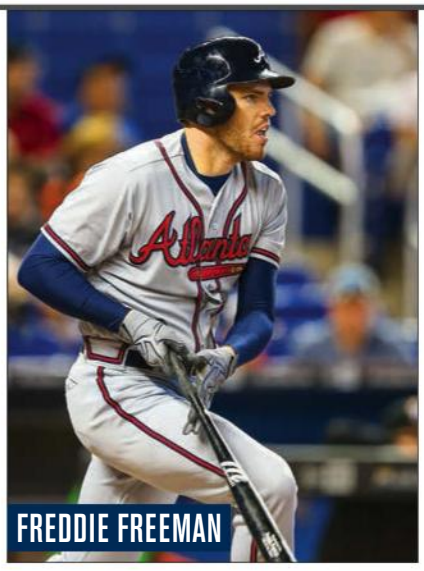
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 OAK
2 OAK	3	4 HOU	5 HOU	6 WAS	7 WAS	8 WAS
9 WAS	10	11	12	13	14 ARI	15 ARI
16 ARI	17 CHC	18 CHC	19 CHC	20 LAD	21 LAD	22 LAD
23 LAD	24 ARI	25 ARI	26 ARI	27	28 PHI	29 PHI
30 PHI	31 PHI					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 LAD	2 LAD	3 LAD	4 MIA	5 MIA
6 MIA	7	8 PHI	9 PHI	10	11 STL	12 STL
13 STL	14 COL	15 COL	16 COL	17 COL	18 CIN	19 CIN
20 CIN	21 SEA	22 SEA	23 SEA	24	25 COL	26 COL
27 COL	28 PHI	29 PHI	30 PHI	31 CHC		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 CHC	2 CHC
3 CHC	4 TEX	5 TEX	6 TEX	7 FLA	8 FLA	9 FLA
10 FLA	11	12 WAS	13 WAS	14 WAS	15 NYM	16 NYM
17 NYM	18	19 WAS	20 WAS	21 WAS	22 PHI	23 PHI
24 PHI	25 NYM	26 NYM	27 NYM	28 MIA	29 MIA	30 MIA
1 MIA						



FREDDIE FREEMAN

CATCHING Tyler Flowers is the starter, and while his .232/.302/.384 career numbers don't inspire sonnets, he is among the game's best at framing pitches — an important skill that is appreciated now more than ever.

BENCH Jack-of-all-trades Sean Rodriguez played every position but pitcher and catcher in 2016 with Pittsburgh and hit 18 home runs in 342 plate appearances. Rodriguez makes an ideal 10th man. He will likely spend some time in right field, spelling Markakis against lefties. He might end up being Kemp's late-inning defensive replacement or might grab some starts at second or third. Speedster Mallex Smith averaged 50 steals per year in the minors but has yet to show that he can hit enough to hold down a regular spot in the majors.

MANAGEMENT After starting the 2016 season 9–28, the Braves parted ways with manager Fredi Gonzalez and replaced him with long-time organizational stalwart Brian Snitker as interim manager. The Braves played nearly .500 baseball under Snitker (59–65), and as a reward his job title was cut in half. Rebuilding teams require a manager who can motivate a team to continue to put forth effort. The Braves have made a clear statement of their opinion of Snitker's abilities, keeping him rather than turning to a more experienced manager.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Braves are in an enviable position for a team on a rebuilding track. They already have a franchise player in Freeman and the makings of one in Swanson. They have a couple of players who have already bloomed into good role players, but they really only have a starter kit for a pitching staff beyond Teheran and too many positions where they will be fielding placeholders. The consensus is that the Braves have one of the best farm systems in the game after their flurry of trades, but while some of the youngsters will be seen at SunTrust Park this year, it will be another two years at least before they are collectively ready to make their mark.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

SURVIVOR Bartolo Colon made his major-league debut on April 4, 1997. It was the same day that the Braves played their first regular-season game in Turner Field, meaning that he has outlasted the entire lifespan of a stadium. Colon is also the last active player who played for the Montreal Expos (2002). When Colon was traded to the Expos in 2002 from the Cleveland Indians (at age 29), Montreal sent back Brandon Phillips (age 21), Grady Sizemore (19), and Cliff Lee (23). Only Phillips remains active in MLB.

ISLANDER Braves minor leaguer Akeel Morris, who previously played for the Mets and was acquired in a trade for Kelly Johnson, is one of three active players born in the U.S. Virgin Islands, along with Padres outfielder Jabari Blash and A's pitcher Jharel Cotton.

ROY RINGER Dansby Swanson was called up by the Braves in mid-August and notched 129 at bats in 38 games. Had he gotten one more at-bat, he would have lost his rookie eligibility for the 2017 season. But as it stands now, the native of Marietta, Ga., is an early favorite for the NL Rookie of the Year Award.

MR. VERSATILITY In 2016, only one player appeared in at least five games at all seven non-battery positions: Braves free-agent pick-up Sean Rodriguez. In fact, Rodriguez was one of only four players in baseball who made any appearances at all seven spots (Andrew Romine, Hernan Perez and Tyler Saladino were the others). However, Rodriguez won't be alone in carrying several gloves around the Braves clubhouse. Chase d'Arnaud appeared at six different positions for the Braves in 2016, logging time at second, short, third, and all three outfield spots.

FATHER FREDDIE On Sept. 19, Freddie Freeman notched four hits, including a double and a home run, as the Braves beat the Mets 7–3, but it wasn't the most interesting thing that he had done that week. Freeman had the monster night on two hours of sleep after flying to New York from Atlanta, where he was spending time with his newborn son.

HOME COOKING The Atlanta Braves have drawn more than 2,000,000 fans to their home games for 26 consecutive years (since 1991). The only team having a longer active streak is the Los Angeles Dodgers, who have done so since 1973.

YOUNGSTERS The Braves fielded one of the youngest collections of starting pitchers in recent memory. Last season, Braves starters 25 and younger pitched 693.1 innings, the most in baseball and 109 more than the next team on the list.

Tom DiPace

BRAVES ROSTER

General Manager: John Coppolella **Manager:** Brian Snitker **Coaches:** Buddy Carlyle (assistant), Jose Castro (asst. hitting), Chuck Hernandez (pitching), Terry Pendleton (bench), Eddie Perez (first base), Marty Reed (bullpen), Kevin Seitzer (hitting), Dave Wallace (special asst. to pitching), Ron Washington (third base)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
	Jesse Biddle	L-L	6-5	230	10/22/91	Lehigh Valley (AAA)	2-4	6.25	9	9	0	44.2	57	27	32
						Reading (AA)	7-2	4.24	15	15	0	80.2	90	34	57
36	Aaron Blair	R-R	6-4	250	5/26/92	**ATLANTA**	**2-7**	**7.59**	**15**	**15**	**0**	**70.0**	**82**	**34**	**46**
						Gwinnett (AAA)	5-4	4.65	13	13	0	71.2	77	32	71
62	Mauricio Cabrera	R-R	6-3	245	9/22/93	**ATLANTA**	**5-1**	**2.82**	**41**	**0**	**6**	**38.1**	**31**	**19**	**32**
						Mississippi (AA)	3-3	3.21	25	0	4	33.2	20	22	35
55	Josh Collmenter	R-R	6-3	240	2/7/86	**ATLANTA**	**2-0**	**2.37**	**3**	**3**	**0**	**19.0**	**15**	**5**	**16**
						ARIZONA	**1-0**	**4.84**	**15**	**0**	**0**	**22.1**	**21**	**11**	**17**
						Reno (AAA)	0-0	1.23	3	2	0	7.1	7	5	6
						Visalia (A)	0-1	10.57	3	3	0	7.2	13	4	6
						Iowa (AAA)	1-0	2.25	4	4	0	16.0	13	8	9
	Bartolo Colon	R-R	5-11	285	5/24/73	**NEW YORK NL**	**15-8**	**3.43**	**34**	**33**	**0**	**191.2**	**200**	**32**	**128**
	R.A. Dickey	R-R	6-3	215	10/29/74	**TORONTO**	**10-15**	**4.46**	**30**	**29**	**0**	**169.2**	**169**	**63**	**126**
26	Mike Foltynewicz	R-R	6-4	220	10/7/91	**ATLANTA**	**9-5**	**4.31**	**22**	**22**	**0**	**123.1**	**125**	**35**	**111**
						Gwinnett (AAA)	1-2	1.67	5	5	0	27.0	13	14	25
	Max Fried	L-L	6-4	185	1/18/94	Rome (A)	8-7	3.93	21	20	0	103.0	87	47	112
	Jaime Garcia	L-L	6-2	215	7/8/86	**ST. LOUIS**	**10-13**	**4.67**	**32**	**30**	**0**	**171.2**	**179**	**57**	**150**
67	Jason Hursh	R-R	6-3	200	10/2/91	**ATLANTA**	**0-0**	**33.75**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**1.1**	**4**	**3**	**1**
						Gwinnett (AAA)	0-0	1.69	8	0	0	16.0	15	8	8
						Mississippi (AA)	3-2	2.05	35	0	3	57.0	42	23	42
	Luke Jackson	R-R	6-2	210	8/24/91	**TEXAS**	**0-0**	**10.80**	**8**	**0**	**0**	**11.2**	**22**	**8**	**3**
						Round Rock (AAA)	1-0	2.45	16	0	2	22.0	13	15	27
						Frisco (AA)	0-1	4.81	20	0	1	24.1	27	17	32
53	Jim Johnson	R-R	6-6	250	6/27/83	**ATLANTA**	**2-6**	**3.06**	**65**	**0**	**20**	**64.2**	**57**	**20**	**68**
46	Ian Krol	L-L	6-1	210	5/9/91	**ATLANTA**	**2-0**	**3.18**	**63**	**0**	**0**	**51.0**	**54**	**13**	**56**
						Gwinnett (AAA)	1-2	4.38	12	0	1	12.1	10	6	14
	Jacob Lindgren	L-L	5-11	210	3/12/93	Tampa (A)	1-0	2.57	6	0	1	7.0	0	9	8
66	Akeel Morris	R-R	6-1	195	11/14/92	Mississippi (AA)	3-1	2.27	25	0	0	35.2	27	21	50
						Binghamton (AA)	2-2	4.62	22	0	6	25.1	19	16	36
40	Jose Ramirez	R-R	6-1	215	1/21/90	**ATLANTA**	**2-2**	**3.58**	**33**	**0**	**0**	**32.2**	**26**	**18**	**33**
						Gwinnett (AAA)	3-2	2.18	36	0	6	41.1	34	18	45
	Armando Rivero	R-R	6-4	190	2/1/88	Iowa (AAA)	5-3	2.13	43	0	1	67.2	41	35	105
75	Paco Rodriguez	L-L	6-3	220	4/16/91	Injured — Missed Season									
50	Chaz Roe	R-R	6-5	190	10/9/86	**ATLANTA**	**1-0**	**3.60**	**21**	**0**	**0**	**20.0**	**14**	**7**	**26**
						BALTIMORE	**1-0**	**3.72**	**9**	**0**	**0**	**9.2**	**8**	**7**	**11**
						Norfolk (AAA)	1-2	2.39	33	0	4	37.2	27	10	45
68	Shae Simmons	R-R	5-11	190	9/3/90	**ATLANTA**	**0-0**	**1.35**	**7**	**0**	**0**	**6.2**	**6**	**0**	**3**
						Gwinnett (AAA)	0-0	1.50	12	4	1	12.0	7	9	14
						Rome (A)	0-0	0.00	4	3	0	3.1	2	1	4
						GCL Braves (R)	0-0	6.00	3	3	0	3.0	2	2	5
	Lucas Sims	R-R	6-2	220	5/10/94	Gwinnett (AAA)	2-6	7.56	11	10	0	50.0	56	37	58
						Mississippi (AA)	5-5	2.67	17	17	0	91.0	64	55	101
49	Julio Teheran	R-R	6-2	205	1/27/91	**ATLANTA**	**7-10**	**3.21**	**30**	**30**	**0**	**188.0**	**157**	**41**	**167**
38	Arodys Vizcaino	R-R	6-0	230	11/13/90	**ATLANTA**	**1-4**	**4.42**	**43**	**0**	**10**	**38.2**	**37**	**26**	**50**
58	Daniel Winkler	R-R	6-3	205	2/2/90	**ATLANTA**	**0-0**	**0.00**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**2.1**	**0**	**1**	**4**
37	Matt Wisler	R-R	6-3	205	9/12/92	**ATLANTA**	**7-13**	**5.00**	**27**	**26**	**1**	**156.2**	**159**	**49**	**115**
						Gwinnett (AAA)	2-1	3.71	4	4	0	26.2	27	5	22

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
25	Tyler Flowers	R-R	6-4	260	1/24/86	**ATLANTA**	**.270**	**83**	**281**	**27**	**76**	**8**	**41**	**29**	**91**	**0**
						Gwinnett (AAA)	.429	2	7	1	3	0	0	1	1	0
						Rome (A)	.000	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
						GCL Braves (R)	.000	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Tuffy Gosewisch	R-R	5-11	200	8/17/83	**ARIZONA**	**.156**	**33**	**90**	**8**	**14**	**3**	**7**	**7**	**22**	**0**
						Reno (AAA)	.342	58	199	33	68	9	26	15	30	0
20	Anthony Recker	R-R	6-2	240	8/29/83	**ATLANTA**	**.278**	**33**	**90**	**6**	**25**	**2**	**15**	**16**	**22**	**1**
						Gwinnett (AAA	.243	40	136	20	33	6	18	16	45	0
						Colo. Sprs. (AAA)	.246	19	61	10	15	2	10	14	17	1

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	Johan Camargo	S-R	6-0	160	12/13/93	Mississippi (AA)	.267	126	446	46	119	4	43	24	82	1
23	Chase d'Arnaud	R-R	6-2	205	1/21/87	**ATLANTA**	**.245**	**84**	**233**	**24**	**57**	**1**	**21**	**23**	**50**	**9**
						Gwinnett (AAA)	.255	22	94	11	24	1	4	6	16	7
5	Freddie Freeman	L-R	6-5	220	9/12/89	**ATLANTA**	**.302**	**158**	**589**	**102**	**178**	**34**	**91**	**89**	**171**	**6**
13	Adonis Garcia	R-R	5-9	205	4/12/85	**ATLANTA**	**.273**	**134**	**532**	**65**	**145**	**14**	**65**	**24**	**93**	**3**
						Gwinnett (AAA)	.356	19	73	14	26	4	18	3	12	2
8	Jace Peterson	L-R	6-0	215	5/9/90	**ATLANTA**	**.254**	**115**	**350**	**45**	**89**	**7**	**29**	**52**	**69**	**5**
						Gwinnett (AAA)	.186	26	97	8	18	0	6	11	15	2
	Sean Rodriguez	R-R	6-0	200	4/26/85	**PITTSBURGH**	**.270**	**140**	**300**	**49**	**81**	**18**	**56**	**33**	**102**	**2**
32	Rio Ruiz	L-R	6-1	230	5/22/94	**ATLANTA**	**.286**	**5**	**7**	**1**	**2**	**0**	**2**	**0**	**2**	**1**
						Gwinnett (AAA)	.271	133	465	52	126	10	62	61	116	1
2	Dansby Swanson	R-R	6-1	190	2/11/94	**ATLANTA**	**.302**	**38**	**129**	**20**	**39**	**3**	**17**	**13**	**34**	**3**
						Mississippi (AA)	.261	84	333	54	87	8	45	35	71	6
						Carolina (A)	.333	21	78	14	26	1	10	15	13	7

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
11	Ender Inciarte	L-L	5-11	190	10/29/90	**ATLANTA**	**.291**	**131**	**522**	**85**	**152**	**3**	**29**	**45**	**68**	**16**
						Gwinnett (AAA)	.333	2	6	0	2	0	0	1	0	0
27	Matt Kemp	R-R	6-4	210	9/23/84	**ATLANTA**	**.280**	**56**	**214**	**35**	**60**	**12**	**39**	**20**	**56**	**1**
						SAN DIEGO	**.262**	**100**	**409**	**54**	**107**	**23**	**69**	**16**	**100**	**0**
22	Nick Markakis	L-L	6-1	215	11/17/83	**ATLANTA**	**.269**	**158**	**599**	**67**	**161**	**13**	**89**	**71**	**101**	**0**
17	Mallex Smith	L-R	5-9	180	5/6/93	**ATLANTA**	**.238**	**72**	**189**	**28**	**45**	**3**	**22**	**20**	**48**	**16**
						Gwinnett (AAA)	.400	3	15	5	6	0	0	0	3	1
						Mississippi (AA)	.438	5	16	4	7	0	4	4	5	3

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

IAN ANDERSON, RHP

Anderson was the third overall pick in the draft out of Shenendehowa High School in Clifton Park, N.Y. He's tall (6'3") and can hit the mid-90s with his fastball, but like a lot of 18-year-olds, he hasn't completely filled out his frame yet. Nor figured out the curveball. Nor played a full season of minor league ball. Once he did sign, his stints in the Gulf Coast and Appalachian leagues produced reasonable results, but at this point, he's all promise with little track record. Anderson, who signed to play at Vanderbilt, will need years of seasoning in the minor leagues before he can sniff the majors. He joins a farm system loaded with pitching prospects.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Dansby Swanson, SS (23) Still technically qualifies as a prospect. The Braves' shortstop of the future does everything well and has drawn comparisons to a young Derek Jeter.

2. Ozzie Albies, SS/2B (20) His approach is based on contact and speed, but at 19 he was holding his own at Class AAA. He could end up partnering with Swanson at SunTrust Park by the All-Star break.

3. Ronald Acuna, OF (19) Acuna has legitimate power potential and the ability to play an up-the-middle position and steal 20 bases.

4. Kolby Allard, LHP (19) Allard is the riskier of two first-round picks from 2015 (No. 14) due to already having had surgery on his back, but his stuff profiles well. His biggest challenge will be staying healthy.

5. Mike Soroka, RHP (19) The Braves spent that other first-round pick (No. 28 overall) on Soroka, who already has a well-developed fastball and curve.

6. Sean Newcomb, LHP (23) A large human (listed at 6'5", 240) with a big left arm. He'll rack up a lot of strikeouts, and a few walks to go with them. At worst, he's an innings-eating lefty with some growth potential.

7. Ian Anderson, RHP (18) Anderson, the Braves' first-round pick in 2016, will start out the year in Class A.

8. Kevin Maitan, SS (17) Signed out of Venezuela, he's the equivalent of a first-round pick out of the international market. Scouts believe he's a future All-Star.

9. Max Fried, LHP (23) Fried has two plus pitches in his arsenal but is already a veteran of Tommy John surgery.

10. Touki Toussaint, RHP (20) The Braves essentially bought Toussaint and his tantalizing (but raw) fastball-curve combo from the Diamondbacks by taking on the dead contract of Bronson Arroyo.

MIAMI MARLINS

The Marlins believe — like they did last year — that they can compete for the postseason in 2017.

This time, however, they'll have to do so without the late Jose Fernandez, one of the game's top pitchers who died in a boating accident in late September. As a result, an already suspect rotation enters the season without a bona fide ace.

But Miami has faith in its core of position players, particularly after career years from outfielder Christian Yelich and catcher J.T. Realmuto. The Marlins boast one of the top outfields with Yelich and All-Stars Marcell Ozuna and Giancarlo Stanton in the middle of the order. Plus, the back end of the bullpen piles up strikeouts with the trio of A.J. Ramos, David Phelps and Kyle Barraclough.

Leading up to the non-waiver trade deadline, Miami was in the thick of the National League Wild Card race and sought outside help by dealing top prospects for reliever Fernando Rodney and starter Andrew Cashner. Neither move panned out.

Then the injury bug hit and exposed a lack of depth. Stanton, first baseman Justin Bour, lefthanders Adam Conley and Wei-Yin Chen, Ramos, utility player Derek Dietrich and Phelps had overlapping disabled list stints during the second half.

The high-water mark of nine games above .500 quickly turned into three games below with a 32–41 record after the All-Star break, though the Marlins stayed in the race until the final weeks of the season.

ROTATION Chen, the club's key offseason signing in '15 and the '16 Opening Day starter, went 5–5 with a career-worst 4.96 ERA in 22 starts and missed nearly two months of the season with an elbow sprain. Conley was putting together a solid first full season in the big leagues until landing on the DL with left third finger tendonitis, finishing 8–6 with a 3.85 ERA in 25 starts and often flirting with no-hitters. Tom Koehler, who has made at least 31 starts in each of the last three seasons (just the third Marlins pitcher to do so), is the other returning starter. Free-agent signees and former All-Stars Edinson Volquez (10–11, 5.37 ERA in '16) and Jeff Locke (9–8, 5.44 ERA) reunite with vice president of pitching development Jim Benedict, who worked with them in Pittsburgh.

BULLPEN There is no shortage of velocity among Miami's relievers, as evidenced by their 570 strikeouts (fourth most in MLB). The issue in 2016 was control, with their 262 walks second most in the majors. After the Marlins missed out on free-agent closers Aroldis Chapman and Kenley Jansen, they signed submariner Brad Ziegler (85 saves) to present opponents with a different arm angle. Miami also added Junichi Tazawa in the hope of forming a super bullpen that likely will have only one southpaw, Hunter Cervenka. Before fracturing his right ring finger in August, the role of closer was Ramos'. Rodney filled in and remained in that capacity until his well-documented struggles (5.89 ERA). Ramos went on to record 40 saves, becoming just the fifth closer in club history to reach that mark. Barraclough's nasty fastball-slider combination helped him lead the NL in strikeouts (113). Phelps proved to be a reliable setup man after years as a starter.

MIDDLE INFIELD As good of a 2015 as Miami's double-play duo had, it was quite the opposite in '16. MLB suspended Dee Gordon, fresh off numerous accolades and a contract extension, in late April for 80 games for violating its PED policy. Upon his return in late July, it took some time for Gordon to find his groove. When he did, the two-time All-Star stole 14 bases in September — tied for most in the majors — and provided the most memorable moment of the season with his upper-deck leadoff homer in honor of Fernandez. After setting career highs in various offensive categories in '15, Adeiny Hechavarria couldn't find his swing last season, batting .236 with just three homers and 38 RBIs. He also wasn't an NL Gold Glove Award finalist for the first time in two years.

CORNERS Martin Prado led the majors with a .368 average with runners in scoring position among players with as at least 140 at bats in those situations. More important, he became the unofficial captain of a team that turned to him for leadership and professionalism. The Marlins wanted continuity at the hot corner and re-signed him to a three-year, $40 million deal. Bour, meanwhile, proved Miami right as the club's first baseman until spraining his ankle on July 2. At the time, he was batting .268 with 15 homers and 46 RBIs in 68 games, mainly in a lefty-righty platoon with Chris Johnson. The Marlins are considering using Realmuto at first every so often to rest his legs.

OUTFIELD The Marlins already felt they had the best trio in baseball, and 2016 helped that case. Yelich captured an NL Silver Slugger Award, shattering career highs in hits (172), doubles (38), homers (21), RBIs (98) and OPS (.859), among others. Ozuna made his first All-Star team, and despite tailing off in the second half, still finished with

2017 PREDICTION
3rd
NL East

2016 RECORD
79-82

HOME: 40-40 **ROAD:** 39-42

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

TEAM INFO

MARLINS PARK
Opened: 2012 **Capacity:** 37,442
Left: 344' **Center:** 407' **Right:** 335'
Tickets: 877-MARLINS
miami.marlins.mlb.com

FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
OF Christian Yelich

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
RHP A.J. Ramos

BULL MARKET
2B Dee Gordon

BEAR MARKET
UT Derek Dietrich

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
LHP Wei-Yin Chen

IPO 3B Brian Anderson

FUTURES MARKET LHP Braxton Garrett

INSIDER TIP Having missed more than two months, 1B Justin Bour might be a forgotten man at drafts. He's hit 38 homers in his last 678 at-bats.

STATLINE

LOW AVG. EXIT VELO: 2016 NL

1. Dee Gordon, Marlins	**78.8 mph**
2. Billy Hamilton, Reds	80.3 mph
3. Ben Revere, Nationals	81.1 mph
4t. Derek Dietrich, Marlins	**81.6 mph**
4t. Ender Inciarte, Braves	81.6 mph

(min. 250 batted balls)

Source: BaseballSavant.mlb.com

Tom DiPace

GIANCARLO STANTON

PROJECTED LINEUP

NEXT LEVEL

LINEUP

2B	Dee Gordon (L)
3B	**Martin Prado (R)**
CF	Christian Yelich (L)
RF	Giancarlo Stanton (R)
LF	Marcell Ozuna (R)
1B	Justin Bour (L)
C	J.T. Realmuto (R)
SS	Adeiny Hechavarria (R)

BENCH

OF	**Ichiro Suzuki (L)**
INF	Miguel Rojas (R)
UT	Derek Dietrich (L)
UT	Yefri Perez (S)
C	A.J. Ellis (R)

ROTATION

LHP	**Wei-Yin Chen**
RHP	Edinson Volquez
LHP	Adam Conley
RHP	Tom Koehler
LHP	Jeff Locke

BULLPEN

RHP	A.J. Ramos (Closer)
RHP	David Phelps
RHP	**Kyle Barraclough**
RHP	Dustin McGowan
LHP	Hunter Cervenka
RHP	Brad Ziegler
RHP	Junichi Tazawa

Martin Prado eclipsed the .300 batting average mark for the first time since 2012. His .305 average was helped by a career-high 24.9 percent line drive rate.

Ichiro is growing more patient. His 8.2 percent walk rate was his best since 2002, and his 26.6 percent of swings on pitches outside of the strike zone was his lowest since 2007.

Wei-Yin Chen's home run per fly ball rate rose for the third straight season. His 14.9 percent rate would have ranked 13th in the majors had he qualified.

Kyle Barraclough had the highest walk rate among qualified relievers (14.4 percent) but remained effective (2.85 ERA) by having the second-lowest home run rate (0.3 percent) and seventh-highest strikeout rate (36.9 percent).

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE MARLINS

"Losing Jose Fernandez had such a profound impact. That affects so many people, I just don't think they'll recover from it. He was a foundational piece, a guy you can't replace. The rotation has Edinson Volquez, Wei-Yin Chen, Adam Conley, Tom Kohler, Jeff Locke — some health questions, low upside. Christian Yelich is a great hitter, but I don't know how much you can trust Giancarlo Stanton anymore. He's just too big, too strong, and he's not on the field enough. It's obviously a big year for him. Martin Prado is a consummate pro, but they don't get much offense from the middle infield. They made a run at the big closers in free agency, so you know they wanted to build a super bullpen to support that rotation. Even so, A.J. Ramos, David Phelps and Kyle Barraclough do a nice job back there. They'll be around .500 again; maybe a little better if everything breaks right."

STATISTICIAN

.263	Team batting average, second in the NL behind the Rockies (.275).
128	Home runs hit, second fewest in the NL (Atlanta, 122).
118	Games on average Giancarlo Stanton has appeared in over seven injury-plagued big-league seasons.
427	Games without a complete game by a Marlins starter. Henderson Alvarez was the last to go the distance — on June 3, 2014, against the Rays.
1	Marlins rank in fewest home runs surrendered in the majors, tied with the Mets (152).
29	Blown saves, most in club history and second most in the NL, behind only the Giants (30).
1.36	WHIP, 20th in the majors. The Marlins struck out 1,379 batters (eighth best) but walked 595 hitters (third most).

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3 WAS	4	5 WAS	6 WAS	7 NYM	8 NYM
9 NYM	10	11 ATL	12 ATL	13 ATL	14 NYM	15 NYM
16 NYM	17 SEA	18 SEA	19 SEA	20	21 SD	22 SD
23 SD	24	25 PHI	26 PHI	27 PHI	28 PIT	29 PIT
30 PIT						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 TB	2 TB	3 TB	4 TB	5 NYM	6 NYM
7 NYM	8 STL	9 STL	10 STL	11	12 ATL	13 ATL
14 ATL	15 HOU	16 HOU	17 HOU	18 LAD	19 LAD	20 LAD
21 LAD	22	23 OAK	24 OAK	25	26 LAA	27 LAA
28 LAA	29 PHI	30 PHI	31 PHI			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 ARI	2 ARI	3 ARI
4 ARI	5 CHC	6 CHC	7 CHC	8 PIT	9 PIT	10 PIT
11 PIT	12	13 OAK	14 OAK	15	16 ATL	17 ATL
18 ATL	19 WAS	20 WAS	21 WAS	22 CHC	23 CHC	24 CHC
25 CHC	26	27 NYM	28 NYM	29 NYM	30 MIL	

July

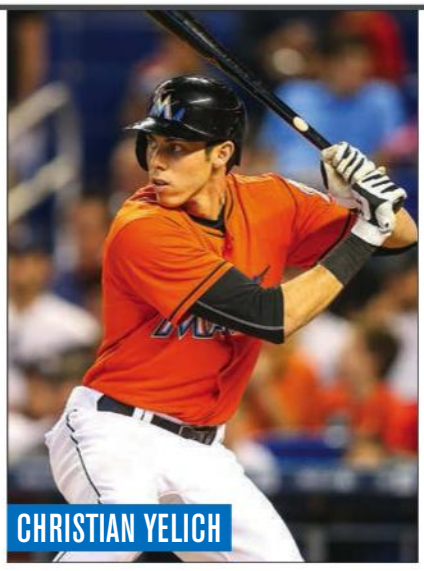
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 MIL
2 MIL	3 STL	4 STL	5 STL	6 STL	7 SF	8 SF
9 SF	10	11	12	13	14 LAD	15 LAD
16 LAD	17 PHI	18 PHI	19 PHI	20	21 CIN	22 CIN
23 CIN	24 TEX	25 TEX	26 TEX	27 CIN	28 CIN	29 CIN
30 CIN	31 WAS					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 WAS	2 WAS	3	4 ATL	5 ATL
6 ATL	7 WAS	8 WAS	9 WAS	10 WAS	11 COL	12 COL
13 COL	14 SF	15 SF	16 SF	17	18 NYM	19 NYM
20 NYM	21	22 PHI	23 PHI	24 PHI	25 SD	26 SD
27 SD	28 WAS	29 WAS	30 WAS	31 PHI		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 PHI	2 PHI
3 PHI	4 WAS	5 WAS	6 WAS	7 ATL	8 ATL	9 ATL
10 ATL	11	12 PHI	13 PHI	14 PHI	15 MIL	16 MIL
17 MIL	18 NYM	19 NYM	20 NYM	21	22 ARI	23 ARI
24 ARI	25 COL	26 COL	27 COL	28 ATL	29 ATL	30 ATL
1 ATL						



CHRISTIAN YELICH

23 homers and 76 RBIs. Stanton, who was scuffling at the plate before a groin injury kept him out for more almost a month, still knocked a team-high 27 dingers.

CATCHING Realmuto, a former high school shortstop, has the tools to be a star. In his first two full seasons as backstop, he has recorded 268 hits, 52 doubles and 21 homers. He also showed improvement behind the plate, throwing out 28 baserunners, tied for fourth in the majors. His backup will be A.J. Ellis, who reunites with manager Don Mattingly, after Jeff Mathis signed with the D-backs following four seasons in Miami.

BENCH Dietrich's bat allowed the Marlins to stay in the hunt despite Gordon's absence. Once thought of as a defensive liability, Dietrich committed just four errors at second and none in his stops at first, third and left field. With Hechavarria's struggles, Miguel Rojas tied a career high in starts at short (26). Known for his glove, he learned to play first and often entered as a late-game defensive replacement. Ichiro Suzuki showed flashes of his old self, finishing with a .291 average and surpassing the 3,000-hit mark, making it a no-brainer to pick up his club option.

MANAGEMENT In his first season at the helm, Mattingly certainly left his mark. Both he and the players never got too high or too low, especially during a season with plenty of unexpected challenges thrown their way. Mattingly's former teammate, Mike Pagliarulo, is in as hitting coach. Former Marlins manager Fredi Gonzalez replaces Lenny Harris as third-base coach. Bench coach Tim Wallach returns after receiving interest for various vacant managerial jobs.

FINAL ANALYSIS Whether the Marlins snap baseball's second-longest postseason drought (13; the Mariners' streak stands at 15) depends upon their success at resolving the rotation. In the end, the biggest factor will be health. The Marlins were at the top of the Wild Card standings until injuries became too much to overcome with their lack of depth.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

DIGGING THE LONG BALL Despite lowering the fences from 11.5 to seven feet in left and 8.5 feet in right field and bringing the center-field wall in to 407 feet, Marlins Park still played big. There were 123 homers in 2016, an average of 1.54 per game. Though the tally marked the most since the ballpark opened in 2012, it still permitted the second-fewest homers, ahead of AT&T Park in San Francisco (119/1.47 per game).

3 X 20 Despite playing in a pitcher's park, the Marlins had three players reach the 20-homer plateau for the first time since 2010. Giancarlo Stanton (27), Marcell Ozuna (23) and Christian Yelich (21) became the first Marlins outfield trio to accomplish the feat in the same season. St. Louis was the only other team to do so in '16.

IN HONOR OF JOSE A two-and-a-half-mile stretch of 17th Avenue that begins at U.S. 1 and runs north to River Drive, at one point passing near Marlins Park, will be known as "Jose Fernandez Avenue." There are also reports that the Marlins are planning to build a permanent memorial for the late pitcher. Following his death, a makeshift memorial was built on the West Plaza, where fans signed walls with his jersey number and left gifts.

WHAT'S IN A NAME? Two of the Marlins' minor-league affiliates changed their nicknames. Double-A Jacksonville will now be known as the Jumbo Shrimp rather than the Suns. Triple-A New Orleans is no longer the Zephyrs but the Baby Cakes — a name that was not very well received on social media.

PUTTING ON A SHOW Marlins Park will host first-round games of the World Baseball Classic as well as All-Star Game festivities in 2017. The United States, Dominican Republic, Colombia and Canada will compete from March 9-13. This is third time Miami has hosted WBC games. The 88th Midsummer Classic, meanwhile, will take place on July 11, with Miami as a host for the first time.

WELCOME BACK The Marlins sent prospect Luis Castillo to the Padres as part of a blockbuster deal for Andrew Cashner last August. Castillo, however, was returned to the Marlins after Colin Rea — also part of the deal — sustained an elbow injury in his first start for Miami. Castillo was added to the team's 40-man roster in the fall.

DONNY MANAGER Don Mattingly never had a losing record in his five seasons as the manager of the Dodgers. He went 79–82 in his first year with the Marlins but still finished fifth in NL Manager of the Year voting.

Tom DiPace

MARLINS ROSTER

Pres. of Baseball Operations: Michael Hill **Manager:** Don Mattingly **Coaches:** Lorenzo Bundy (outfield/baserunning), Fredi Gonzalez (third base), Perry Hill (first base), Frank Menechino (asst. hitting), Juan Nieves (pitching), Mike Pagliarulo (hitting), Brian Schneider (catching), Pat Shine (major league administrative), Jeff Urgelles (bullpen coordinator), Tim Wallach (bench)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
46	Kyle Barraclough	R-R	6-3	225	5/23/90	**MIAMI**	**6-3**	**2.85**	**75**	**0**	**0**	**72.2**	**45**	**44**	**113**
						New Orleans (AAA)	1-0	1.50	3	0	1	6.0	2	1	9
65	Austin Brice	R-R	6-4	235	6/19/92	**MIAMI**	**0-1**	**7.07**	**15**	**0**	**0**	**14.0**	**9**	**5**	**14**
						New Orleans (AAA)	0-0	1.04	5	0	2	8.2	3	1	10
						Jacksonville (AA)	4-7	2.89	27	13	2	93.1	79	29	79
	Luis Castillo	R-R	6-2	170	12/12/92	Jacksonville (AA)	0-2	3.86	3	3	0	14.0	12	7	12
						Jupiter (A)	8-4	2.07	23	21	0	117.2	95	18	91
30	Hunter Cervenka	L-L	6-1	245	1/3/90	**MIAMI**	**0-0**	**4.82**	**18**	**0**	**0**	**9.1**	**11**	**5**	**7**
						New Orleans (AAA)	0-0	0.00	2	0	1	2.0	1	0	4
						ATLANTA	**1-0**	**3.18**	**50**	**0**	**0**	**34.0**	**20**	**23**	**35**
						Mississippi (AA)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	3.0	1	1	2
54	Wei-Yin Chen	R-L	6-0	200	7/21/85	**MIAMI**	**5-5**	**4.96**	**22**	**22**	**0**	**123.1**	**134**	**24**	**100**
61	Adam Conley	L-L	6-3	200	5/24/90	**MIAMI**	**8-6**	**3.85**	**25**	**25**	**0**	**133.1**	**125**	**62**	**124**
43	Odrisamer Despaigne	R-R	6-0	200	4/4/87	**BALTIMORE**	**0-2**	**5.60**	**16**	**0**	**0**	**27.1**	**32**	**15**	**17**
						MIAMI	**0-0**	**9.00**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**3.0**	**4**	**1**	**0**
						Norfolk (AAA)	1-9	3.87	18	17	0	88.1	91	27	70
49	Brian Ellington	R-R	6-3	215	8/4/90	**MIAMI**	**4-2**	**2.45**	**32**	**0**	**0**	**33.0**	**27**	**16**	**32**
						New Orleans (AAA)	1-0	3.12	32	0	2	34.2	17	26	54
67	Jake Esch	R-R	6-3	205	3/27/90	**MIAMI**	**0-1**	**5.54**	**3**	**3**	**0**	**13.0**	**17**	**6**	**10**
						New Orleans (AAA)	2-1	5.70	4	4	0	23.2	26	9	14
						Jacksonville (AA)	10-9	4.03	22	22	0	118.1	117	37	82
66	Jarlin Garcia	L-L	6-3	215	1/18/93	Jacksonville (AA)	1-3	4.54	9	9	0	39.2	38	11	27
						Jupiter (A)	0-0	1.29	5	0	0	7.0	4	1	5
						GCL Marlins (R)	0-0	0.00	3	3	0	4.0	1	0	6
	Tayron Guerrero	R-R	6-8	210	1/9/91	**SAN DIEGO**	**0-0**	**4.50**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**2.0**	**3**	**1**	**0**
						El Paso (AAA)	0-0	6.00	13	0	0	12.0	12	9	11
						San Antonio (AA)	0-3	4.94	19	0	0	23.2	20	10	25
						Jacksonville (AA)	1-1	1.93	12	0	4	14.0	11	3	15
34	Tom Koehler	R-R	6-3	235	6/29/86	**MIAMI**	**9-13**	**4.33**	**33**	**33**	**0**	**176.2**	**176**	**83**	**147**
	Jeff Locke	L-L	6-0	200	11/20/87	**PITTSBURGH**	**9-8**	**5.44**	**30**	**19**	**0**	**127.1**	**151**	**44**	**73**
	Dustin McGowan	R-R	6-3	235	3/24/82	**MIAMI**	**1-3**	**2.82**	**55**	**0**	**1**	**67.0**	**49**	**33**	**63**
						New Orleans (AAA)	0-0	0.00	4	0	2	7.1	1	6	7
20	Justin Nicolino	L-L	6-3	195	11/22/91	**MIAMI**	**3-6**	**4.99**	**18**	**13**	**0**	**79.1**	**96**	**20**	**37**
						New Orleans (AAA)	7-6	4.13	14	14	0	85.0	87	13	49
35	David Phelps	R-R	6-2	200	10/9/86	**MIAMI**	**7-6**	**2.28**	**64**	**5**	**4**	**86.2**	**61**	**38**	**114**
44	A.J. Ramos	R-R	5-10	200	9/20/86	**MIAMI**	**1-4**	**2.81**	**67**	**0**	**40**	**64.0**	**52**	**35**	**73**
	Drew Steckenrider	R-R	6-5	215	1/10/91	New Orleans (AAA)	0-1	5.40	10	0	7	11.2	11	7	15
						Jacksonville (AA)	1-0	1.48	24	0	6	30.1	12	10	39
						Jupiter (A)	0-0	0.00	6	0	1	10.0	2	2	17
	Junichi Tazawa	R-R	5-11	200	6/6/86	**BOSTON**	**3-2**	**4.17**	**53**	**0**	**0**	**49.2**	**47**	**14**	**54**
62	Jose Urena	R-R	6-2	200	9/12/91	**MIAMI**	**4-9**	**6.13**	**28**	**12**	**1**	**83.2**	**91**	**29**	**58**
						New Orleans (AAA)	3-3	3.17	12	12	0	48.1	41	21	41
	Edinson Volquez	R-R	6-0	220	7/3/83	**KANSAS CITY**	**10-11**	**5.37**	**34**	**34**	**0**	**189.1**	**217**	**76**	**139**
64	Nick Wittgren	R-R	6-2	210	5/29/91	**MIAMI**	**4-3**	**3.14**	**48**	**0**	**0**	**51.2**	**50**	**10**	**42**
						New Orleans (AAA)	1-0	1.42	10	0	2	12.2	6	4	11
	Brad Ziegler	R-R	6-4	220	10/10/79	**ARIZONA**	**2-3**	**2.82**	**36**	**0**	**18**	**38.1**	**41**	**15**	**27**
						BOSTON	**2-4**	**1.52**	**33**	**0**	**4**	**29.2**	**26**	**11**	**31**

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	A.J. Ellis	R-R	6-2	225	4/9/81	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**.194**	**53**	**139**	**8**	**27**	**1**	**13**	**16**	**24**	**1**
						PHILADELPHIA	**.313**	**11**	**32**	**3**	**10**	**1**	**9**	**3**	**7**	**1**
11	J.T. Realmuto	R-R	6-1	210	3/18/91	**MIAMI**	**.303**	**137**	**509**	**60**	**154**	**11**	**48**	**28**	**100**	**12**
18	Tomas Telis	S-R	5-8	220	6/18/91	**MIAMI**	**.308**	**10**	**13**	**1**	**4**	**1**	**4**	**0**	**2**	**0**
						New Orleans (AAA)	.310	91	336	46	104	6	45	27	42	4

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
41	Justin Bour	L-R	6-3	265	5/28/88	**MIAMI**	**.264**	**90**	**280**	**35**	**74**	**15**	**51**	**38**	**56**	**0**
						New Orleans (AAA)	.111	5	18	0	2	0	0	1	0	0
32	Derek Dietrich	L-R	6-0	205	7/18/89	**MIAMI**	**.279**	**128**	**351**	**39**	**98**	**7**	**42**	**32**	**84**	**1**
						Jacksonville (AA)	.167	5	18	2	3	0	0	2	7	0
9	Dee Gordon	L-R	5-11	170	4/22/88	**MIAMI**	**.268**	**79**	**325**	**47**	**87**	**1**	**14**	**18**	**55**	**30**
						New Orleans (AAA)	.257	9	35	7	9	0	2	1	5	3
3	Adeiny Hechavarria	R-R	6-0	195	4/15/89	**MIAMI**	**.236**	**155**	**508**	**52**	**120**	**3**	**38**	**33**	**73**	**1**
	Austin Nola	R-R	6-0	195	12/28/89	New Orleans (AAA)	.261	113	372	34	97	6	44	24	56	4
14	Martin Prado	R-R	6-0	215	10/27/83	**MIAMI**	**.305**	**153**	**600**	**70**	**183**	**8**	**75**	**49**	**69**	**2**
	J.T. Riddle	L-R	6-1	180	10/12/91	New Orleans (AAA)	.268	15	56	4	15	1	2	1	9	1
						Jacksonville (AA)	.278	101	389	49	108	3	51	33	72	5
19	Miguel Rojas	R-R	5-11	195	2/24/89	**MIAMI**	**.247**	**123**	**194**	**27**	**48**	**1**	**14**	**11**	**27**	**2**

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
68	Destin Hood	R-R	6-2	205	4/3/90	**MIAMI**	**.240**	**13**	**25**	**3**	**6**	**1**	**2**	**0**	**11**	**0**
						New Orleans (AAA)	.267	126	476	61	127	15	80	37	113	11
13	Marcell Ozuna	R-R	6-1	225	11/12/90	**MIAMI**	**.266**	**148**	**557**	**75**	**148**	**23**	**76**	**43**	**115**	**0**
77	Yefri Perez	S-R	5-11	170	2/24/91	**MIAMI**	**.667**	**12**	**3**	**5**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**4**
						Jacksonville (AA)	.259	84	328	49	85	1	28	39	66	39
27	Giancarlo Stanton	R-R	6-6	245	11/8/89	**MIAMI**	**.240**	**119**	**413**	**56**	**99**	**27**	**74**	**50**	**140**	**0**
51	Ichiro Suzuki	L-R	5-11	175	10/22/73	**MIAMI**	**.291**	**143**	**327**	**48**	**95**	**1**	**22**	**30**	**42**	**10**
21	Christian Yelich	L-R	6-3	195	12/5/91	**MIAMI**	**.298**	**155**	**578**	**78**	**172**	**21**	**98**	**72**	**138**	**9**

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

BRAXTON GARRETT, LHP

The Marlins selected Garrett, whose stock soared in the months leading up to the draft, with the No. 7 pick. Not only did he post a 0.53 ERA with 131 strikeouts in 65.1 innings during his senior year, but he also led Team USA to the 18U World Cup championship in Japan. With room to grow with his 6'3", 190-pound frame, Garrett can add to his fastball (up to 94 mph) and curveball. His changeup has the possibility of becoming a plus pitch. Garrett, who was headed to play collegiately at Vanderbilt, signed with the Marlins for a reported $4,145,800 just hours before the deadline on July 15. Since he was a late signee, Garrett did not pitch in the minor leagues in 2016.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Braxton Garrett, LHP (19) Scouts believe his ceiling is as a No. 2 starter and that he is very advanced for a high schooler.

2. Jarlin Garcia, LHP (24) Injuries limited Garcia to just 50.2 innings (1–3, 3.73 ERA) in 2016. In the Arizona Fall League, he went 0–1 with a 4.97 ERA in nine appearances.

3. Brian Anderson, 3B (23) Anderson capped a solid season between Class A Jupiter and Class AA Jacksonville (.265/11 HRs/65 RBIs) with a three-run homer in the Arizona Fall League championship game.

4. Luis Castillo, RHP (24) Added to the 40-man roster in November, Castillo went 8–6 with a 2.26 ERA between Jupiter and Jacksonville.

5. Tyler Kolek, RHP (21) After undergoing Tommy John surgery, the Marlins expect their 2014 first-round pick back on the mound in '17. Before the injury, he consistently threw over 100 mph.

6. Austin Brice, RHP (24) The Marlins converted him into a back-end reliever midway through 2016. Brice had a 4–7 record with a 2.74 ERA with four saves in 32 games between Jacksonville and New Orleans.

7. Austin Dean, OF (23) A former AFL Fall Star, the outfielder hit .238 with 23 doubles, five triples, 11 homers and 67 RBIs in 130 games for Jacksonville last season.

8. Stone Garrett, OF (21) Garrett opened 2016 on the DL with a wrist injury. He batted .213 with nine doubles, two triples, six homers and 16 RBIs for Class A Greensboro.

9. Dillon Peters, LHP (24) Broke out this past season with a combined 14–6 record and 2.38 ERA in 24 starts between Jupiter and Jacksonville.

10. Tomas Telis, C (25) The switch-hitting backstop batted .310 with 16 doubles, three triples, six homers and 45 RBIs in 91 games for New Orleans.

NEW YORK METS

The Mets, who have enjoyed back-to-back winning seasons for the first time in almost a decade, are now knee-deep into their World Series-chasing phase. This offseason, instead of waiting and hoping that Yoenis Cespedes would come back, general manager Sandy Alderson struck early and signed possibly the best free agent on the market and gave him a rich contract and a no-trade clause.

The biggest question mark for the Mets this season will again be based around their health. If they avoid the long run of injuries that nearly submarined them over the last two years, they could be among the best teams in the National League. If they don't, then they'll need to find a way to squeeze into the postseason again.

The team is still centered around its starting rotation, with Noah Syndergaard emerging as the ace and the rest of the rotation all under 30. But as the club learned this past season, relying on hard-throwing arms can be a dangerous game. Still, the Mets should spend the season somewhere near the top of the National League East, battling with Washington for division supremacy.

ROTATION Syndergaard is among the most talented pitchers in baseball. It's hard to top his 100-mph fastball, hellacious 92-mph slider and off-speed pitches. Last season, that meant an eighth-place finish in the Cy Young voting and a 2.60 ERA. But like every other member of the rotation, he battled injury. Steven Matz had shoulder woes and underwent offseason elbow surgery. Jacob deGrom had surgery on his ulnar nerve in his elbow. Matt Harvey missed the entire second half because of surgery to correct thoracic outlet syndrome. Zack Wheeler hasn't pitched since 2014 because of Tommy John surgery. But the Mets remain well stocked with immensely talented, though healing, pitchers. Mets starters had the third-lowest ERA of any staff in baseball last year, and that was despite all of those injuries. So the ceiling is high for 2017. They will, however, miss innings eater Bartolo Colon, who signed with Atlanta. Robert Gsellman and Seth Lugo were nice late-season surprises and will serve as depth and insurance — though if the Mets turn to them for prolonged periods of time, it means something has gone wrong again.

BULLPEN Addison Reed was a back-end stalwart in 2016. His 1.97 ERA was the fifth best of any NL reliever who threw at least 40 innings. But he'll be needed for more than just the eighth inning this year. Reed could start the season as the Mets' closer because of Jeurys Familia's offseason issues. Familia was arrested on a domestic violence charge in October, and although that charge was dropped, Major League Baseball could still suspend him. Familia set a team record with 51 saves but again struggled in the postseason. Who knows how long he'll miss, but the Mets might be without him for a significant portion of the season. The Mets will have to find consistency earlier on in the game. Jerry Blevins was not re-signed, putting the club in need of a reliable lefty. Lugo, Gsellman and even Wheeler could be used out of the bullpen at times, depending how desperate — or how comfortable — the Mets are.

MIDDLE INFIELD Asdrubal Cabrera was a breakout star in 2016. He suddenly turned into a power hitter, swatting 23 home runs and posting a career-best .810 OPS, as well as proving to be a stable defender at shortstop. He's entering the last year of his two-year contract, and the Mets now have a top-half-of-the-order hitter on a bargain at just $8.25 million this season. Neil Walker is back, too, although on a one-year, $17.2 million contract. Before his season ended because of back surgery, he tied a career high with 23 home runs in just 113 games. That gives the Mets certainty at second base for another year. With Walker and Cabrera, the Mets have a solid and productive, if unspectacular, middle of the diamond.

CORNERS Between them, Lucas Duda and David Wright played in 84 total games last season. They were a shining example of the injury woes that beset the Mets. A stress fracture in his back sidelined Duda for four months. Wright had neck surgery and is the more worrisome case. He hasn't been an All-Star since 2013 and has played more than 112 games in a season just once in the last four years. The Mets can't rely on him anymore, and whatever they get from the 34-year-old at this point seems like a blessing. That's why Jose Reyes is back for another year as much-needed stand-in. Duda, as long as he's not hurt, should put a 30-home run bat back into the lineup.

OUTFIELD The Mets have an overflow of riches here. Cespedes will probably shift to left field full time this season after playing center in his first two years in New York. He's the centerpiece of the offense, and the Mets need to keep him in the lineup. Who plays around him, though, will be interesting. Michael Conforto regressed after a strong debut, even going down to the minors again, but the Mets still believe he can develop into an All-Star and be the quintessential

2017 PREDICTION
2nd
NL East

2016 RECORD
87-75

HOME: 44-37 **ROAD:** 43-38

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

TEAM INFO

CITI FIELD
Opened: 2009 **Capacity:** 41,800
Left: 335' **Center:** 408' **Right:** 330'
Tickets: 718-507-TIX
newyork.mets.mlb.com

FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
OF Yoenis Cespedes

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
RHP Noah Syndergaard

BULL MARKET
OF Michael Conforto

BEAR MARKET
3B Jose Reyes

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES Yes

IPO RHP Robert Gsellman

FUTURES MARKET SS Amed Rosario

INSIDER TIP The Mets starters, save Thor, will never be more affordable at auction or accessible at a draft. Regardless of their health histories, throw caution to the wind and hunt them all.

STATLINE

NET HITS LOST TO SHIFTS: 2016

1. Curtis Granderson, Mets	**24**
2. Kendrys Morales, Royals	21
3. David Ortiz, Red Sox	17
4. Ryan Howard, Phillies	16
5t. Victor Martinez, Tigers	15
5t. Logan Morrison, Rays	15
5t. Albert Pujols, Angels	15

Source: Baseball Info Solutions

Tom DiPace

➤ PROJECTED LINEUP

NEXT LEVEL

LINEUP

RF	Curtis Granderson (L)
SS	Asdrubal Cabrera (S)
LF	Yoenis Cespedes (R)
1B	Lucas Duda (L)
3B	David Wright (R)
2B	**Neil Walker (S)**
CF	Michael Conforto (L)
C	Travis d'Arnaud (R)

Despite tying a career high with 23 homers in 2015, Neil Walker hit only nine doubles. With one triple, his 33 extra-base hits were 11 fewer than his previous career low.

BENCH

C	Rene Rivera (R)
INF	**Wilmer Flores (R)**
INF	Jose Reyes (S)
OF	Jay Bruce (L)
OF	Juan Lagares (R)

Wilmer Flores slashed a career-best .267/.319/.469 and swung at a career-low 29.7 percent of pitches out of the strike zone.

ROTATION

RHP	**Noah Syndergaard**
RHP	Jacob deGrom
RHP	Matt Harvey
LHP	Steven Matz
RHP	Zack Wheeler

Noah Syndergaard led qualified starters with an average fastball velocity of 98.0 mph, 1.9 mph faster than second place Yordano Ventura.

BULLPEN

RHP	**Jeurys Familia (Closer)**
RHP	Addison Reed
RHP	Hansel Robles
RHP	Robert Gsellman
RHP	Seth Lugo
LHP	Josh Smoker
LHP	Josh Edgin

Jeurys Familia had the lowest home run rate (0.3 percent) among qualified relievers. However, a rise in walk rate (6.2 to 9.7 percent) contributed to his rise in ERA (1.85 to 2.55).

➤ SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE METS

"Matt Harvey had such a good delivery out of college, and now he's had Tommy John surgery and thoracic outlet syndrome. With the velocity and power these guys generate, you just never know who's gonna stay healthy. All I know is you've gotta have depth — and they have it, though losing Bartolo Colon hurts. They had to get Yoenis Cespedes back, because he's a guy you can count on in an offense with three starting infielders coming off injuries. I'm not as worried about Lucas Duda, because he didn't have surgery for his back problem. I don't care what anyone says, once they cut on you, you're never the same. Poor David Wright's spent so much time rehabbing his back and neck that it's taken away from his regular preparation. It's a very debilitating injury, and you'll see it in his lack of mobility."

➤ STATISTICIAN

65.4	Percentage of total pitches thrown by Mets pitchers that were fastballs — most in MLB, by a lot.
77.2	Innings pitched last year by Jeurys Familia, Hansel Robles and Addison Reed. Each tied for the sixth-most innings by a National League reliever last year.
218	Home runs the Mets hit last year — most in franchise history, and 41 more than in 2015.
58.3	Percentage of Mets plate appearances that began with a strike — tied for the lowest rate in the National League.
94.5	Matt Harvey's average fastball velocity, down 1.4 mph from 2015.
.589	The Mets' winning percentage when Yoenis Cespedes is in the lineup since acquiring him in July 2015. That's a 95-win pace over a regular season. They're 18–23 without him in the lineup.

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3 MIL	4	5 ATL	6 ATL	7 MIA	8 MIA
9 MIA	10 PHI	11 PHI	12 PHI	13 MIA	14 MIA	15 MIA
16 MIA	17	18 PHI	19 PHI	20 PHI	21 WAS	22 WAS
23 WAS	24	25 ATL	26 ATL	27 ATL	28 WAS	29 WAS
30 WAS						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 ATL	2 ATL	3 ATL	4 ATL	5 MIA	6 MIA
7 MIA	8 SF	9 SF	10 SF	11	12 MIL	13 MIL
14 MIL	15 ARI	16 ARI	17 ARI	18	19 LAA	20 LAA
21 LAA	22	23 SD	24 SD	25 SD	26 PIT	27 PIT
28 PIT	29 MIL	30 MIL	31 MIL			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 MIL	2 PIT	3 PIT
4 PIT	5	6 TEX	7 TEX	8	9 ATL	10 ATL
11 ATL	12 CHC	13 CHC	14 CHC	15 WAS	16 WAS	17 WAS
18 WAS	19 LAD	20 LAD	21 LAD	22 LAD	23 SF	24 SF
25 SF		27 MIA	28 MIA	29 MIA	30 PHI	

July

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 PHI
2 PHI	3 WAS	4 WAS	5 WAS	6	7 STL	8 STL
9 STL	10	11	12	13	14 COL	15 COL
16 COL	17 STL	18 STL	19 STL	20 STL	21 OAK	22 OAK
23 OAK	24 SD	25 SD	26 SD	27 SD	28 SEA	29 SEA
30 SEA	31					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 COL	2 COL	3 COL	4 LAD	5 LAD
6 LAD	7	8 TEX	9 TEX	10 PHI	11 PHI	12 PHI
13 PHI	14 NYY	15 NYY	16 NYY	17 NYY	18 MIA	19 MIA
20 MIA	21 ARI	22 ARI	23 ARI	24 ARI	25 WAS	26 WAS
27 WAS	28	29 CIN	30 CIN	31 CIN		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 HOU	2 HOU
3 HOU	4 PHI	5 PHI	6 PHI	7 CIN	8 CIN	9 CIN
10 CIN	11	12 CHC	13 CHC	14 CHC	15 ATL	16 ATL
17 ATL	18 MIA	19 MIA	20 MIA	21	22 WAS	23 WAS
24 WAS	25 ATL	26 ATL	27 ATL	28	29 PHI	30 PHI
1 PHI						

YOENIS CESPEDES

No. 3 hitter — maybe even this year. The Mets had Curtis Granderson and Jay Bruce on the trade market in the offseason since both are in the last year of their contracts. Juan Lagares still can't hit much, but he is — again, when healthy — a Gold Glove-level center fielder. Too bad for him and the Mets he hurt his shoulder in winter ball.

CATCHING It wasn't a good sign for Travis d'Arnaud that he seemed to lose the primary catching job to Rene Rivera, who batted only .222. Still, D'Arnaud should be the starter behind the plate and has the potential to hit 20-plus home runs and be a strong pitch-framer. Rivera doesn't hit much but developed a rapport with Syndergaard and could steal away more playing time.

BENCH Reyes resurrected his career in Queens, and he will be relied on to spell Wright at third when needed. Wilmer Flores hit 16 home runs playing all around the infield, but a wrist injury cut short his 2016 season. The team's surplus in the outfield will help strengthen the bench.

MANAGEMENT Manager Terry Collins has shown the wherewithal to withstand ugly patches during a season and keep the Mets humming, though he can make questionable bullpen choices every once in awhile. He works well in tandem with Alderson, who keeps finding prospects in the farm system to trade away for reinforcements — though that ability could be tested this year. Pitching coach Dan Warthen has shown a capability to get the most out of his staff.

FINAL ANALYSIS If Syndergaard, Harvey, deGrom and Matz all pitch to their talent level, the Mets could be scary good and have a rotation that rivals any in baseball. And the lineup could be in the top half of the NL, too, with enough hitters still around their prime. But there are no certainties with the Mets — as we've learned in recent seasons. If all goes well, this is a team capable of winning the World Series. If it doesn't, the Mets could struggle to reach .500.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

DOWN ON THE FARM The Mets have made some changes with their minor-league teams this offseason. Wally Backman, the former Triple-A manager, is not coming back, and Pedro Lopez replaces him as the manager at Las Vegas. Lopez was the Double-A manager for the past five years. Frank Viola, the former Cy Young winner who helped develop Noah Syndergaard, Jacob deGrom and Steven Matz, remains as the pitching coach.

THOR'S HAMMER Syndergaard is now officially the hardest-throwing starting pitcher in the big leagues. He led all MLB starters last year with a fastball that averaged 98 mph and a slider that averaged 90.9 mph — both the highest ever recorded, according to FanGraphs. His changeup averaged 89.8 mph, tied with Felix Hernandez for the second hardest ever. What's more impressive is that Syndergaard pitched a significant portion of the season with a bone chip in his right elbow.

LOOSENING THE STRINGS The Mets have received criticism for their low payrolls in recent seasons, due in large part to the connection to the Bernie Madoff financial saga. Those days may be over. They gave Yoenis Cespedes one of the largest contracts — based on annual pay — ever (four years, $110 million). That was after they ended 2016 with the 12th-highest payroll in baseball.

NEARING THE END Terry Collins needs 41 more games to set the record for the longest reign as manager in franchise history. Currently, Davey Johnson, who led the Mets to the 1986 World Series title, has the record with 1,012 games. Collins enters the season with a 481–491 record — not bad since he began his tenure with four straight losing seasons. He is 67 years old, the oldest manager in the majors (19 days older than Dusty Baker), and has hinted that 2017 might be his final season.

FEWER CHIPS If the Mets need reinforcements again during the 2017 season, they'll be hard-pressed to have as many options to trade as they have in recent years. They traded away four more prospects last year to help the team reach the postseason for the second straight year. Now, general manager Sandy Alderson and company are hoping the same farm system that produced their young starting pitchers and helped them acquire Cespedes, Jay Bruce and others can deliver more prospects. The Mets used to have a top-5 farm system in baseball, but promotions and trades have put it closer to the middle of the pack now.

Tom DiPace

METS ROSTER

General Manager: Sandy Alderson **Manager:** Terry Collins **Coaches:** Ricky Bones (bullpen), Tom Goodwin (first base), Kevin Long (hitting), Pat Roessler (asst. hitting), Dick Scott (bench), Glenn Sherlock (third base), Dan Warthen (pitching)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
48	Jacob deGrom	L-R	6-4	180	6/19/88	**NEW YORK NL**	**7-8**	**3.04**	**24**	**24**	**0**	**148.0**	**142**	**36**	**143**
66	Josh Edgin	R-L	6-1	245	12/17/86	**NEW YORK NL**	**1-0**	**5.23**	**16**	**0**	**0**	**10.1**	**10**	**6**	**11**
						Las Vegas (AAA)	2-2	3.24	37	0	2	33.1	35	20	38
						St. Lucie (A)	0-0	2.08	6	3	0	4.1	2	1	7
27	Jeurys Familia	R-R	6-3	240	10/10/89	**NEW YORK NL**	**3-4**	**2.55**	**78**	**0**	**51**	**77.2**	**63**	**31**	**84**
	Chris Flexen	R-R	6-3	235	7/1/94	St. Lucie (A)	10-9	3.56	25	25	0	134.0	125	51	95
36	Sean Gilmartin	L-L	6-2	200	5/8/90	**NEW YORK NL**	**0-1**	**7.13**	**14**	**1**	**0**	**17.2**	**21**	**7**	**11**
						Las Vegas (AAA)	9-7	4.86	19	18	0	107.1	122	31	94
62	Erik Goeddel	R-R	6-3	190	12/20/88	**NEW YORK NL**	**2-2**	**4.54**	**36**	**0**	**0**	**35.2**	**33**	**14**	**36**
						Las Vegas (AAA)	1-1	4.08	24	1	1	28.2	28	15	34
65	Robert Gsellman	R-R	6-4	205	7/18/93	**NEW YORK NL**	**4-2**	**2.42**	**8**	**7**	**0**	**44.2**	**42**	**15**	**42**
						Las Vegas (AAA)	1-5	5.73	9	9	0	48.2	56	16	40
						Binghamton (AA)	3-4	2.71	11	11	0	66.1	57	15	48
33	Matt Harvey	R-R	6-4	215	3/27/89	**NEW YORK NL**	**4-10**	**4.86**	**17**	**17**	**0**	**92.2**	**111**	**25**	**76**
67	Seth Lugo	R-R	6-4	225	11/17/89	**NEW YORK NL**	**5-2**	**2.67**	**17**	**8**	**0**	**64.0**	**49**	**21**	**45**
						Las Vegas (AAA)	3-4	6.50	21	14	0	73.1	103	20	62
32	Steven Matz	R-L	6-2	200	5/29/91	**NEW YORK NL**	**9-8**	**3.40**	**22**	**22**	**0**	**132.1**	**129**	**31**	**129**
	Marcos Molina	R-R	6-3	188	3/8/95	Injured — Missed Season									
50	Rafael Montero	R-R	6-0	185	10/17/90	**NEW YORK NL**	**0-1**	**8.05**	**9**	**3**	**0**	**19.0**	**23**	**16**	**20**
						Las Vegas (AAA)	4-6	7.20	16	16	0	80.0	111	40	68
						Binghamton (AA)	4-3	2.20	9	9	0	49.0	35	19	40
43	Addison Reed	L-R	6-4	230	12/27/88	**NEW YORK NL**	**4-2**	**1.97**	**80**	**0**	**1**	**77.2**	**60**	**13**	**91**
47	Hansel Robles	R-R	5-11	185	8/13/90	**NEW YORK NL**	**6-4**	**3.48**	**68**	**0**	**1**	**77.2**	**69**	**36**	**85**
58	Josh Smoker	L-L	6-2	250	11/26/88	**NEW YORK NL**	**3-0**	**4.70**	**20**	**0**	**0**	**15.1**	**16**	**4**	**25**
						Las Vegas (AAA)	3-2	4.11	52	0	3	57.0	66	18	81
34	Noah Syndergaard	L-R	6-6	240	8/29/92	**NEW YORK NL**	**14-9**	**2.60**	**31**	**30**	**0**	**183.2**	**168**	**43**	**218**
45	Zack Wheeler	L-R	6-4	195	5/30/90	St. Lucie (A)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	1.0	0	1	0
63	Gabriel Ynoa	R-R	6-2	205	5/26/93	**NEW YORK NL**	**1-0**	**6.38**	**10**	**3**	**0**	**18.1**	**26**	**7**	**17**
						Las Vegas (AAA)	12-5	3.97	25	25	0	154.1	170	40	78

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
18	Travis d'Arnaud	R-R	6-2	210	2/10/89	**NEW YORK NL**	**.247**	**75**	**251**	**27**	**62**	**4**	**15**	**19**	**50**	**0**
						Las Vegas (AAA)	.333	3	12	2	4	0	2	2	3	0
						St. Lucie (A)	.310	8	29	3	9	0	5	9	5	1
	Tomas Nido	R-R	6-0	205	4/12/94	St. Lucie (A)	.320	90	344	38	110	7	46	19	42	0
26	Kevin Plawecki	R-R	6-2	210	2/26/91	**NEW YORK NL**	**.197**	**48**	**132**	**6**	**26**	**1**	**11**	**17**	**33**	**0**
						Las Vegas (AAA)	.300	55	190	27	57	8	40	13	19	0
44	Rene Rivera	R-R	5-10	215	7/31/83	**NEW YORK NL**	**.222**	**65**	**185**	**12**	**41**	**6**	**26**	**16**	**54**	**0**
						Las Vegas (AAA)	.280	8	25	3	7	0	5	2	3	0

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
13	Asdrubal Cabrera	S-R	6-0	205	11/13/85	**NEW YORK NL**	**.280**	**141**	**521**	**65**	**146**	**23**	**62**	**38**	**103**	**5**
						St. Lucie (A)	.333	2	6	2	2	0	2	0	2	0
2	Gavin Cecchini	R-R	6-2	200	12/22/93	**NEW YORK NL**	**.333**	**4**	**6**	**2**	**2**	**0**	**2**	**0**	**2**	**0**
						Las Vegas (AAA)	.325	117	446	71	145	8	55	48	55	4
21	Lucas Duda	L-R	6-4	255	2/3/86	**NEW YORK NL**	**.229**	**47**	**153**	**20**	**35**	**7**	**23**	**15**	**36**	**0**
4	Wilmer Flores	R-R	6-3	205	8/6/91	**NEW YORK NL**	**.267**	**103**	**307**	**38**	**82**	**16**	**49**	**23**	**48**	**1**
						Binghamton (AA)	.235	5	17	1	4	0	1	1	2	0
7	Jose Reyes	S-R	6-0	195	6/11/83	**NEW YORK NL**	**.267**	**60**	**255**	**45**	**68**	**8**	**24**	**23**	**49**	**9**
						Binghamton (AA)	.207	9	29	6	6	0	2	3	3	1
						Brooklyn (A)	.182	4	11	3	2	0	1	3	4	2
						Albuquerque (AAA)	.303	9	33	7	10	2	2	7	4	3
15	Matt Reynolds	R-R	6-1	200	12/3/90	**NEW YORK NL**	**.225**	**47**	**89**	**11**	**20**	**3**	**13**	**4**	**34**	**0**
						Las Vegas (AAA)	.264	71	269	43	71	2	24	26	64	9
54	T.J. Rivera	R-R	6-1	205	10/27/88	**NEW YORK NL**	**.333**	**33**	**105**	**10**	**35**	**3**	**16**	**3**	**17**	**0**
						Las Vegas (AAA)	.353	105	405	67	143	11	85	23	54	3
	Amed Rosario	R-R	6-2	190	11/20/95	Binghamton (AA)	.341	54	214	38	73	2	31	19	51	6
						St. Lucie (A)	.309	66	265	27	82	3	40	21	36	13
20	Neil Walker	S-R	6-3	210	9/10/85	**NEW YORK NL**	**.282**	**113**	**412**	**57**	**116**	**23**	**55**	**42**	**84**	**3**
5	David Wright	R-R	6-0	205	12/20/82	**NEW YORK NL**	**.226**	**37**	**137**	**18**	**31**	**7**	**14**	**26**	**55**	**3**

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	Wuilmer Becerra	R-R	6-3	225	10/1/94	St. Lucie (A)	.312	65	247	27	77	1	34	9	52	7
19	Jay Bruce	L-L	6-3	225	4/3/87	**CINCINNATI**	**.265**	**97**	**370**	**60**	**98**	**25**	**80**	**27**	**83**	**4**
						NEW YORK NL	**.219**	**50**	**169**	**14**	**37**	**8**	**19**	**17**	**43**	**0**
52	Yoenis Cespedes	R-R	5-10	220	10/18/85	**NEW YORK NL**	**.280**	**132**	**479**	**72**	**134**	**31**	**86**	**51**	**108**	**3**
						St. Lucie (A)	.222	3	9	1	2	0	2	0	2	0
30	Michael Conforto	L-R	6-1	215	3/1/93	**NEW YORK NL**	**.220**	**109**	**304**	**38**	**67**	**12**	**42**	**36**	**89**	**2**
						Las Vegas (AAA)	.422	33	128	30	54	9	28	13	18	2
3	Curtis Granderson	L-R	6-1	200	3/16/81	**NEW YORK NL**	**.237**	**150**	**545**	**88**	**129**	**30**	**59**	**74**	**130**	**4**
56	Ty Kelly	S-R	6-0	180	7/20/88	**NEW YORK NL**	**.241**	**39**	**58**	**9**	**14**	**1**	**7**	**11**	**9**	**0**
						Las Vegas (AAA)	.328	81	271	45	89	2	35	38	42	5
12	Juan Lagares	R-R	6-1	215	3/17/89	**NEW YORK NL**	**.239**	**79**	**142**	**15**	**34**	**3**	**9**	**11**	**27**	**4**
						Binghamton (AA)	.333	4	18	2	6	0	2	0	5	0
9	Brandon Nimmo	L-R	6-3	205	3/27/93	**NEW YORK NL**	**.274**	**32**	**73**	**12**	**20**	**1**	**6**	**6**	**20**	**0**
						Las Vegas (AAA)	.352	97	392	72	138	11	61	46	73	7

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

JUSTIN DUNN, RHP

What does an organization need when they have a rotation of young hard-throwing pitchers? Another one. The Mets took Dunn out of Boston College with the 19th overall pick, and he's already become one of the better prospects in their system. Dunn had a 1.50 ERA and 35 strikeouts in 30 innings in his professional debut last summer in the New York-Penn League. Dunn was a reliever in college but is now a starter who can hit the high 90s with his fastball. The Mets grabbed another pitcher 12 picks later, Anthony Kay out of UConn. Dunn and Kay could anchor the next generation of young starting pitchers to make their way to New York — although Kay underwent Tommy John surgery in October and is out for 2017.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Amed Rosario, SS (21) Rosario is the shortstop and star of the future and wasn't available in trade talks. He reached Double-A this past season, where he hit .341, and was ranked the 11th-best prospect in baseball by MLB.com.

2. Dominic Smith, 1B (21) Smith added power to his swing and posted an .824 OPS in Double-A. He could be the successor to Lucas Duda.

3. Gavin Cecchini, SS (23) He debuted in the majors last season and hit .325 in Triple-A. Cecchini could end up moving positions and team with Rosario as the Mets' middle infield of the future.

4. Justin Dunn, RHP (21) The 2016 first-round pick will likely start the season in Single-A.

5. Robert Gsellman, RHP (23) Gsellman impressed in his major-league debut, with a 2.42 ERA in 44.2 innings after a rocky Triple-A stint.

6. Brandon Nimmo, OF (24) He showed tremendous plate discipline (.423 OBP) and some power in Triple-A but posted a .666 OPS in 32 games with the Mets.

7. Desmond Lindsay, CF (20) The Mets' top pick in 2015 hit .303 during his first full professional season. He's still transitioning to center field, but he's shown top-notch athleticism and promise.

8. Wuilmer Becerra, OF (22) Becerra is showing some potential as a future corner outfielder but still hasn't moved above High-A.

9. Thomas Szapucki, LHP (20) The lefty dominated rookie ball and Low-A with 86 strikeouts in 52 innings.

10. Anthony Kay, LHP (22) The 31st overall pick in the 2016 draft will miss the upcoming season after having Tommy John surgery.

PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES

Hope is building in Philadelphia.

The Phillies, who finished last season with an average age of 26.9, the second youngest in baseball, have brought a handful of young talent to the majors — and more is on the way. Evidence of a much-improved farm system was seen in November when the club added 11 prospects to its 40-man roster. No other team added more than eight. And two years after posting the worst winning percentage (.435) among domestic minor-league affiliates and sending no teams to the playoffs, Phillies farm clubs had the best mark domestic mark in baseball (.595) and had four teams make the playoffs.

While there is promise for the future, the best the Phillies can do in the present is offer the potential for more progress in a rebuild that is moving into its third season. Even with the worst offense in baseball, the team improved by eight wins to 71 in 2016. With a more seasoned core, the addition of a few place-holding veterans and the eventual arrival of more young talent, these Phillies should continue to ascend, but not yet to the level of a playoff team.

ROTATION The Phillies used a starting pitcher age 27 or younger in 124 of 162 games in 2016, making it their youngest rotation since 1950, and the staff had a 4.41 ERA, almost a run lower than 2015. Leading the youth is a pair of veterans, Jeremy Hellickson and Clay Buchholz. Hellickson had a bounce-back season after coming over from Arizona, and the team hopes Buchholz can do the same after being traded from Boston in December. Both could be July trade chips if they pitch well. Steady Jerad Eickhoff delivered 20 quality starts and became just the fourth Phillie in the last 20 years to make 33 starts and record a 3.65 ERA or better, joining Cole Hamels, Roy Halladay and Curt Schilling. The strong, wide-shouldered righthander could be a breakout talent in 2017. It will be interesting to watch the continued development of power-armed righty Vince Velasquez. He struck out 10.4 batters per nine in 2016 but often exited early because of high pitch counts and eventually was shut down in early September to protect his surgically repaired arm. Eyes will focus on Aaron Nola in spring training to see if the former first-rounder comes back healthy from an elbow strain that ended his season in July. Zach Eflin might be better after having a pair of surgeries to alleviate long-stranding issues with knee tendinitis. Jake Thompson, Alec Asher, Adam Morgan and Ben Lively will all be in the mix before the season ends.

BULLPEN Phillies relievers ranked among the worst in the majors with a 5.01 ERA and 82 home runs allowed in 2016. Improving the unit was a priority for GM Matt Klentak, and veteran righthanders Joaquin Benoit and Pat Neshek should help on their way to becoming potential July trade chips. Hard-throwing righthanders Hector Neris and Edubray Ramos could be the strength of this unit. Neris' fastball-splitter mix helped him strike out 11.4 batters per nine innings in 2016 as he took over at closer when Jeanmar Gomez struggled. Conspicuously absent is a proven lefty, though rookie Joely Rodriguez is an intriguing power arm.

MIDDLE INFIELD Signed on the same day as teens in Venezuela a decade ago, Freddy Galvis and Cesar Hernandez have blossomed into a top defensive tandem. Galvis led all NL shortstops in fielding percentage (eight errors in 625 chances) and hit an eye-popping 20 homers. However, his .274 on-base percentage was the worst in the majors and won't sit well for long with a front office that values the stat and has top prospect J.P. Crawford on the way. Hernandez tied for the majors lead with 11 triples and hit .327 with a whopping .421 on-base percentage after June 20. He hit .248 with a .293 on-base percentage before that date.

CORNERS In third baseman Maikel Franco and first baseman Tommy Joseph, the team has young, right-handed power. Franco clubbed 25 homers and a team-high 88 RBIs. However, he is a notorious free swinger and must improve his selectivity and .306 on-base percentage to reach his huge offensive potential. Joseph came out of nowhere to hit 21 homers in 315 at-bats. Neither player has good range. Joseph is a converted catcher still adapting to first base. Franco has good hands and a strong arm but grades out below average in advanced metrics.

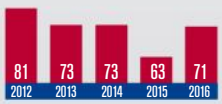
OUTFIELD The Phillies hope the addition of veteran Howie Kendrick in left field can improve the production of an outfield that ranked last in the majors in homers (37) and OPS (.677) and 27th in batting average (.242) in 2016. Kendrick is coming off the worst season of his career and is entering his free-agent year, so he should be motivated for a rebound. One of the biggest questions in camp will be whether the Phils go with electrifying rookie Roman Quinn in right field or look to a more proven player via a trade or late-winter signing. Quinn, a switch-hitter with blazing speed, could be a standout on both sides of the ball if he can put together that elusive healthy season.

2017 PREDICTION
4th
NL East

2016 RECORD
71-91

HOME: 37-44 **ROAD:** 34-47

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND



TEAM INFO

CITIZENS BANK PARK
Opened: 2004 **Capacity:** 43,651
Left: 329' **Center:** 401' **Right:** 330'
Tickets: 215-463-5000
philadelphia.phillies.mlb.com

➤ FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
OF Odubel Herrera

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
RHP Jerad Eickhoff

BULL MARKET
RHP Hector Neris

BEAR MARKET
SS Freddy Galvis

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
RHP Aaron Nola

IPO OF Roman Quinn

FUTURES MARKET C Jorge Alfaro

INSIDER TIP Eickhoff came up the ranks far less heralded than the others in the rotation, but watch for him to soon emerge as the most reliable, durable and ultimately effective of the bunch.

➤ STATLINE

OPS VS. SLIDERS: 2016 NL

1. Cesar Hernandez, Phillies	**1.238**
2. Anthony Rizzo, Cubs	1.220
3. Keon Broxton, Brewers	1.131
4. Tommy Joseph, Phillies	**1.103**
5. Aledmys Diaz, Cardinals	1.052

(min. 32 ABs vs. sliders)

Source: Bill James Handbook

Tom DiPace

ODUBEL HERRERA

PROJECTED LINEUP

NEXT LEVEL

LINEUP

2B	Cesar Hernandez (S)	
RF	Roman Quinn (S)	
CF	**Odubel Herrera (L)**	*Odubel Herrera led baseball with a 14.6 percent infield hit rate. However, his batting averaged dipped 11 points to .286 in part because his BABIP dipped 38 points to .349.*
3B	Maikel Franco (R)	
1B	Tommy Joseph (R)	
LF	Howie Kendrick (R)	
C	Cameron Rupp (R)	
SS	Freddy Galvis (S)	

BENCH

UT	Andres Blanco (S)	
C/1B	Andrew Knapp (S)	
OF	**Aaron Altherr (R)**	*Aaron Altherr struck out or walked in 40.5 percent of his plate appearances last season. Only three qualified hitters surpassed that mark.*
OF	Daniel Nava (S)	
OF	Tyler Goeddel (R)	

ROTATION

RHP	**Jeremy Hellickson**	*Jeremy Hellickson had the lowest contact rate of his career (77.2 percent) and highest rate of swings on pitches outside the strike zone (34.5 percent).*
RHP	Jerad Eickhoff	
RHP	Clay Buchholz	
RHP	Vince Velasquez	
RHP	Aaron Nola	

BULLPEN

RHP	Hector Neris (Closer)	
RHP	Edubray Ramos	
RHP	Joaquin Benoit	
RHP	Pat Neshek	
RHP	**Jeanmar Gomez**	*Jeanmar Gomez was a different pitcher in each half. The most notable differences were in his walk rate (6.0 to 9.2 percent) and batting average against (.232 to .356).*
LHP	Joely Rodriguez	
RHP	Luis Garcia	

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE PHILLIES

"They're not ready to go all out financially yet; they're gearing up for that free-agent class in a couple of years and will scoop up whoever the Yankees don't get. They've got a good young core of position players coming, with two solid prospects behind the plate in Jorge Alfaro and Andrew Knapp. They added some veterans — Howie Kendrick, Joaquin Benoit, Pat Neshek — to try to be respectable. But the young guys around them are just kind of vanilla, not big-impact kind of guys. Nick Williams is a prospect, but there are too many inconsistencies in his game. I don't trust Maikel Franco at all; the tools are huge, but he has some big holes in his approach and makes very few adjustments. They've got pitching volume, but not a ton of impact besides Vincent Velasquez. He can be an ace. He was filthy last year when he was right, but he can't stay healthy."

STATISTICIAN

-186	The Phillies' run differential in 2016, the worst in the majors.
.230	The Phillies' batting average at home in 2016, the worst in the team's 134-year history.
.291	The Phillies' on-base percentage at home in 2016, the worst in the team's 134-year history.
1.92	Walks per nine innings for Jerad Eickhoff in 2016, fourth best among NL starters.
49	Infield and bunt hits by Cesar Hernandez in 2016, tops in the majors.
102	Strikeouts by Hector Neris in 2016, second most ever by a Phillies reliever.
0	Remaining players from the 2008 World Series title team after the departure of Ryan Howard.
9	Phillies who made their big-league debut in 2016.

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3 CIN	4	5 CIN	6 CIN	7 WAS	8 WAS
9 WAS	10 NYM	11 NYM	12 NYM	13	14 WAS	15 WAS
16 WAS	17	18 NYM	19 NYM	20 NYM	21 ATL	22 ATL
23 ATL	24	25 MIA	26 MIA	27 MIA	28 LAD	29 LAD
30 LAD						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 CHC	2 CHC	3 CHC	4 CHC	5 WAS	6 WAS
7 WAS	8	9 SEA	10 SEA	11	12 WAS	13 WAS
14 WAS	15	16 TEX	17 TEX	18 TEX	19 PIT	20 PIT
21 PIT	22 COL	23 COL	24 COL	25 COL	26 CIN	27 CIN
28 CIN	29 MIA	30 MIA	31 MIA			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2 SF	3 SF
4 SF	5 ATL	6 ATL	7 ATL	8 ATL	9 STL	10 STL
11 STL	12 BOS	13 BOS	14 BOS	15 BOS	16 ARI	17 ARI
18 ARI	19	20 STL	21 STL	22 STL	23 ARI	24 ARI
25 ARI	26 ARI	27 SEA	28 SEA	29	30 NYM	

July

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 NYM
2 NYM	3 PIT	4 PIT	5 PIT	6 PIT	7 SD	8 SD
9 SD	10	11	12	13	14 MIL	15 MIL
16 MIL	17 MIA	18 MIA	19 MIA	20	21 MIL	22 MIL
23 MIL	24 HOU	25 HOU	26 HOU	27	28 ATL	29 ATL
30 ATL	31 ATL					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 LAA	2 LAA	3 LAA	4 COL	5 COL
6 COL	7	8 ATL	9 ATL	10 NYM	11 NYM	12 NYM
13 NYM	14 SD	15 SD	16 SD	17 SF	18 SF	19 SF
20 SF	21	22 MIA	23 MIA	24 MIA	25 CHC	26 CHC
27 CHC	28 ATL	29 ATL	30 ATL	31 MIA		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 MIA	2 MIA
3 MIA	4 NYM	5 NYM	6 NYM	7 WAS	8 WAS	9 WAS
10 WAS	11	12 MIA	13 MIA	14 MIA	15 OAK	16 OAK
17 OAK	18 LAD	19 LAD	20 LAD	21 LAD	22 ATL	23 ATL
24 ATL	25 WAS	26 WAS	27 WAS	28	29 NYM	30 NYM
1 NYM						

CESAR HERNANDEZ

Center fielder Odubel Herrera is already a standout as evidenced by a five-year, $30.5 million wintertime extension. He leads all Phillies in batting (.291) and OPS (.773) the last two years and grades out well in advanced defensive metrics. Returning Aaron Altherr remains in the picture, and non-roster player Daniel Nava will get a look.

CATCHING Burly Cameron Rupp looked to drive the ball more in 2016 and succeeded with a career-high 16 homers and a .447 slugging percentage, fourth best among big-league catchers. Rupp's defense — he threw out 13 of 58 (22.4 percent) would-be base stealers — and game-calling have been questioned, but both should be better after a career-high 105 games. The team has an interesting call at backup: versatile rookie Andrew Knapp or veteran Bryan Holaday.

BENCH Manager Pete Mackanin has called Andres Blanco the best utility man he's seen in nearly 50 years of pro ball. Blanco can pick it anywhere in the infield and also carries a catcher's mitt and outfield glove. The switch-hitter provides a good at-bat off the bench and in spot starts. Knapp could back up at first as well as catcher. Altherr is a standout defensive outfielder.

MANAGEMENT The club remains committed to a methodical rebuild that will produce sustainable long-term success. The team has invested both philosophically and financially in analytics and has the resources to spend big on talent once it builds a core. "The only option for me is winning," billionaire owner John Middleton told CSN Philly. "But we need to build this the right way. We need to be patient."

FINAL ANALYSIS The experience gained by a handful of important young players should allow for more improvement in 2017, though the offense is still woefully short of making this team a contender. Finding out which young players are going to be difference makers and getting even more youngsters to the majors remains the chief goal.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

AN ANALYTICS EXPLOSION For years, the Phillies watched from the breakdown lane as other clubs zoomed by on the analytics superhighway. Now, at the demand of ownership, the Phillies have moved into the fast lane. "In 2013, our analytics department was zero," billionaire partner John Middleton told CSN Philly. "In 2017, we're going to have a minimum of six full-time people, a number of interns, and a budget measured in the millions. Our competitors may add people as well, and add to their budgets, but right now we're projecting to have one of the top analytics departments in baseball. We have come light years."

GOOD TIMING With only one player, Odubel Herrera, signed to a long-term contract, the rebuilding but deep-pocketed Phillies are in good shape to make a big dent in the monster free-agent class that is set to hit the market after the 2018 season. "I have no doubt this franchise will make significant investments when the time is right," GM Matt Klentak says.

I CAN SEE CLEARLY Heading into spring training 2016, there was buzz about many prospects in an improved Phillies' farm system. None of those prospects was named Tommy Joseph. In fact, after suffering a fifth concussion as a catcher in May 2015, Joseph was removed from the 40-man roster after that season. He passed unclaimed through waivers and went unpicked in the Rule 5 Draft. The Phillies moved him to first base and brought him to minor-league camp for one last shot. Joseph made the most of the chance. He tore up the International League for six weeks and forced his way to Philly, where took time from Ryan Howard and hit 21 homers in 315 at-bats. Turns out that fifth concussion was a blessing as doctors discovered Joseph had pre-existing ocular issues. Several months of eye therapy cured his problems with tracking and focus and now Joseph has gone from a castoff to a building block.

A TOUGH ASSIGNMENT The 2016 Phillies were the worst offensive team in the majors, scoring 610 runs, 39 fewer than anyone else. To help fix things, the club looked to its TV broadcast booth and tabbed former postseason hero Matt Stairs as hitting coach. "I feel like I was a hitting coach for the fans the last three years, talking about all of our hitters, talking about situations and hitting approach," Stairs says. "I already have a book on every hitter's strengths and weakness. Now I'll work with those hitters on the field."

Tom DiPace

PHILLIES ROSTER

General Manager: Matt Klentak **Manager:** Pete Mackanin **Coaches:** Larry Bowa (bench), Rick Kranitz (asst. pitching), Bob McClure (pitching), John McLaren (bullpen), Mickey Morandini (first base), Juan Samuel (third base), Matt Stairs (hitting)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
	Drew Anderson	R-R	6-3	185	3/22/94	Clearwater (A)	2-1	1.93	8	8	0	32.2	26	10	37
						Lakewood (A)	1-3	3.38	7	7	0	37.1	29	12	41
	Mark Appel	R-R	6-5	220	7/15/91	Lehigh Valley (AAA)	3-3	4.46	8	8	0	38.1	40	20	34
49	Alec Asher	R-R	6-4	230	10/4/91	**PHILADELPHIA**	**2-1**	**2.28**	**5**	**5**	**0**	**27.2**	**22**	**4**	**13**
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	3-0	1.53	4	4	0	29.1	15	3	19
						Reading (AA)	1-2	3.38	5	5	0	29.1	29	5	21
						GCL Phillies (R)	0-0	1.50	3	3	0	6.0	4	2	6
	Joaquin Benoit	R-R	6-4	250	7/26/77	**SEATTLE**	**1-1**	**5.18**	**26**	**0**	**0**	**24.1**	**20**	**15**	**28**
						TORONTO	**2-0**	**0.38**	**25**	**0**	**1**	**23.2**	**17**	**9**	**24**
	Clay Buchholz	L-R	6-3	190	8/14/84	**BOSTON**	**8-10**	**4.78**	**37**	**21**	**0**	**139.1**	**130**	**55**	**93**
	Sean Burnett	L-L	5-11	185	9/17/82	**WASHINGTON**	**0-0**	**3.18**	**10**	**0**	**0**	**5.2**	**5**	**1**	**3**
						Syracuse (AAA)	0-0	5.40	5	0	0	5.0	7	0	4
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	0-0	2.35	7	0	0	7.2	8	6	5
						Gwinnett (AAA)	0-0	0.00	6	0	0	5.1	3	1	5
						Rochester (AAA)	0-3	2.15	29	0	3	29.1	20	7	18
56	Zach Eflin	R-R	6-6	215	4/8/94	**PHILADELPHIA**	**3-5**	**5.54**	**11**	**11**	**0**	**63.1**	**67**	**17**	**31**
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	5-2	2.90	11	11	0	68.1	49	11	55
48	Jerad Eickhoff	R-R	6-4	245	7/2/90	**PHILADELPHIA**	**11-14**	**3.65**	**33**	**33**	**0**	**197.1**	**187**	**42**	**167**
	Elniery Garcia	L-L	6-0	155	12/24/94	Clearwater (A)	12-4	2.68	20	19	0	117.2	94	36	91
57	Luis Garcia	R-R	6-3	230	1/30/87	**PHILADELPHIA**	**1-1**	**6.46**	**17**	**0**	**0**	**15.1**	**21**	**8**	**14**
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	6-3	2.14	48	0	13	54.2	38	24	53
46	Jeanmar Gomez	R-R	6-3	215	2/10/88	**PHILADELPHIA**	**3-5**	**4.85**	**70**	**0**	**37**	**68.2**	**78**	**22**	**47**
52	Severino Gonzalez	R-R	6-2	155	9/28/92	**PHILADELPHIA**	**1-2**	**5.60**	**27**	**0**	**0**	**35.1**	**40**	**7**	**34**
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	0-1	3.31	15	1	0	35.1	37	6	26
						Reading (AA)	2-0	1.69	6	0	0	10.2	9	2	9
58	Jeremy Hellickson	R-R	6-1	190	4/8/87	**PHILADELPHIA**	**12-10**	**3.71**	**32**	**32**	**0**	**189.0**	**173**	**45**	**154**
	Ben Lively	R-R	6-4	190	3/5/92	Lehigh Valley (AAA)	11-5	3.06	19	19	0	117.2	83	27	90
						Reading (AA)	7-0	1.87	9	9	0	53.0	35	15	49
39	Adam Morgan	L-L	6-1	200	2/27/90	**PHILADELPHIA**	**2-11**	**6.04**	**23**	**21**	**0**	**113.1**	**141**	**29**	**95**
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	6-1	3.04	8	7	0	50.1	43	10	52
50	Hector Neris	R-R	6-2	215	6/14/89	**PHILADELPHIA**	**4-4**	**2.58**	**79**	**0**	**2**	**80.1**	**59**	**30**	**102**
	Pat Neshek	S-R	6-3	220	9/4/80	**HOUSTON**	**2-2**	**3.06**	**60**	**0**	**0**	**47.0**	**33**	**11**	**43**
27	Aaron Nola	R-R	6-2	195	6/4/93	**PHILADELPHIA**	**6-9**	**4.78**	**20**	**20**	**0**	**111.0**	**116**	**29**	**121**
	Ricardo Pinto	R-R	6-0	165	1/20/94	Reading (AA)	7-6	4.10	27	25	0	156.0	150	51	101
	Nick Pivetta	R-R	6-5	220	2/14/93	Lehigh Valley (AAA)	1-2	2.55	5	5	0	24.2	20	10	27
						Reading (AA)	11-6	3.41	22	22	0	124.0	108	41	111
61	Edubray Ramos	R-R	6-0	160	12/19/92	**PHILADELPHIA**	**1-3**	**3.83**	**42**	**0**	**0**	**40.0**	**36**	**11**	**40**
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	1-0	0.38	15	0	3	23.2	15	3	26
						Reading (AA)	1-1	2.40	11	0	7	15.0	9	1	15
63	Joely Rodriguez	L-L	6-1	200	11/14/91	**PHILADELPHIA**	**0-0**	**2.79**	**12**	**0**	**0**	**9.2**	**8**	**4**	**7**
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	0-0	2.79	13	0	0	19.1	16	6	18
						Reading (AA)	7-0	2.57	33	0	2	49.0	46	16	41
						Clearwater (A)	0-0	0.00	7	0	3	8.1	3	1	10
44	Jake Thompson	R-R	6-4	235	1/31/94	**PHILADELPHIA**	**3-6**	**5.70**	**10**	**10**	**0**	**53.2**	**53**	**28**	**32**
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	11-5	2.50	21	21	0	129.2	105	37	87
	Alberto Tirado	R-R	6-0	180	12/10/94	Clearwater (A)	0-0	16.20	2	0	0	3.1	3	6	6
						Lakewood (A)	7-1	3.23	20	11	0	61.1	48	36	96
28	Vince Velasquez	R-R	6-3	205	6/7/92	**PHILADELPHIA**	**8-6**	**4.12**	**24**	**24**	**0**	**131.0**	**129**	**45**	**152**
						Reading (AA)	1-0	1.80	1	1	0	5.0	2	1	3

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
38	Jorge Alfaro	R-R	6-2	225	6/11/93	**PHILADELPHIA**	**.125**	**6**	**16**	**0**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**8**	**0**
						Reading (AA)	.285	97	404	68	115	15	67	22	105	3
	Andrew Knapp	S-R	6-1	195	11/9/91	Lehigh Valley (AAA)	.266	107	403	55	107	8	46	37	107	2
29	Cameron Rupp	R-R	6-2	260	9/28/88	**PHILADELPHIA**	**.252**	**105**	**389**	**36**	**98**	**16**	**54**	**24**	**114**	**1**

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
4	Andres Blanco	S-R	5-10	195	4/11/84	**PHILADELPHIA**	**.253**	**90**	**190**	**26**	**48**	**4**	**21**	**11**	**41**	**2**
	Pedro Florimon	S-R	6-2	185	12/10/86	**PITTSBURGH**	**.208**	**18**	**24**	**4**	**5**	**0**	**4**	**1**	**12**	**0**
						Indianapolis (AAA)	.255	107	298	36	76	5	36	33	87	14
7	Maikel Franco	R-R	6-1	215	8/26/92	**PHILADELPHIA**	**.255**	**152**	**581**	**67**	**148**	**25**	**88**	**40**	**106**	**1**
13	Freddy Galvis	S-R	5-10	185	11/14/89	**PHILADELPHIA**	**.241**	**158**	**584**	**61**	**141**	**20**	**67**	**25**	**136**	**17**
	Hector Gomez	R-R	6-2	195	3/5/88	SK Wyverns (Korea)	.283	117	456	74	129	21	62	25	87	16
16	Cesar Hernandez	S-R	5-10	160	5/23/90	**PHILADELPHIA**	**.294**	**155**	**547**	**67**	**161**	**6**	**39**	**66**	**116**	**17**
19	Tommy Joseph	R-R	6-1	255	7/16/91	**PHILADELPHIA**	**.257**	**107**	**315**	**47**	**81**	**21**	**47**	**22**	**75**	**1**
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	.347	27	95	11	33	6	17	4	12	0
	Richie Shaffer	R-R	6-3	220	3/15/91	**TAMPA BAY**	**.250**	**20**	**48**	**5**	**12**	**1**	**4**	**5**	**18**	**0**
						Durham (AAA)	.227	119	428	49	97	11	48	65	135	4
	Jesmuel Valentin	S-R	5-9	180	5/12/94	Lehigh Valley (AAA)	.248	36	105	17	26	4	14	12	24	0
						Reading (AA)	.276	89	341	59	94	5	38	38	56	4

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
23	Aaron Altherr	R-R	6-5	215	1/14/91	**PHILADELPHIA**	**.197**	**57**	**198**	**23**	**39**	**4**	**22**	**23**	**69**	**7**
	Dylan Cozens	L-L	6-6	235	5/31/94	Reading (AA)	.276	134	521	106	144	40	125	61	186	21
2	Tyler Goeddel	R-R	6-4	180	10/20/92	**PHILADELPHIA**	**.192**	**92**	**213**	**17**	**41**	**4**	**16**	**17**	**52**	**3**
37	Odubel Herrera	L-R	5-11	205	12/29/91	**PHILADELPHIA**	**.286**	**159**	**583**	**87**	**167**	**15**	**49**	**63**	**134**	**25**
	Howie Kendrick	R-R	5-11	220	7/12/83	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**.255**	**146**	**487**	**65**	**124**	**8**	**40**	**50**	**96**	**10**
						R. Cucamonga (A)	.333	4	15	2	5	0	4	0	3	1
	Daniel Nava	S-L	5-11	200	2/22/83	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**.235**	**45**	**119**	**10**	**28**	**1**	**13**	**9**	**26**	**0**
						Salt Lake (AAA)	.365	22	85	5	31	1	13	6	10	1
						KANSAS CITY	**.091**	**9**	**11**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**4**	**0**
24	Roman Quinn	S-R	5-10	170	5/14/93	**PHILADELPHIA**	**.263**	**15**	**57**	**10**	**15**	**0**	**6**	**8**	**19**	**5**
						Reading (AA)	.287	71	286	58	82	6	25	30	68	31
						GCL Phillies (R)	.500	6	22	6	11	0	0	1	3	5
	Nick Williams	L-L	6-3	195	9/8/93	Lehigh Valley (AAA)	.258	125	497	78	128	13	64	19	136	6

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

MICKEY MONIAK, OF

Picking first in the draft for the second time in franchise history — they tabbed Pat Burrell in 1998 — the Phillies selected Moniak, arguably the best hitter in high school baseball, and signed him to a club-record $6.1 million bonus. A pure center fielder with speed, Moniak has been compared to perennial All-Star Steve Finley. He hit .476 with seven homers and 12 triples as a senior at La Costa Canyon High in Carlsbad, Calif., then .284 with 16 extra-base hits, a .340 on-base percentage and 28 RBIs in 46 games in the Gulf Coast League. Moniak added 20 pounds of muscle to his 6'2" frame in the offseason and is ready for the South Atlantic League. "He's going to hit and hit for average," a rival scout says. "He's a good center fielder. If he ends up getting stronger, he could be a corner bat that's unbelievable. There's no negative here. It's a good pick."

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. J.P. Crawford, SS (22) The team's top pick in 2013 has the plate discipline the Phillies front office is looking for. If he doesn't arrive sometime in 2017, something's wrong.

2. Mickey Moniak, CF (18) Received hitting tips from granddad Bill Moniak, a former Red Sox farmhand who was coached by Ted Williams.

3. Jorge Alfaro, C (23) He has huge power, a rocket arm and athleticism. Will look to add defensive polish playing every day in Triple-A.

4. Sixto Sanchez, RHP (18) He gave up just three runs in 54 innings in the Gulf Coast League in 2016 and has the organization buzzing about his arm and mound presence.

5. Nick Williams, OF (23) High-ceiling talent does everything except get on base consistently. Will return to Triple-A and look to improve .287 OBP.

6. Rhys Hoskins, 1B (24) Moves to Triple-A after 55 homers and 206 RBIs in first two full pro seasons.

7. Dylan Cozens, RF (22) Adam Dunn comp is a hulking left-handed hitter with mammoth power to all fields. Led all of minor-league ball with 40 homers at Double-A in 2016 but struck out 186 times.

8. Franklyn Kilome, RHP (21) Lanky Dominican has shown a power fastball and a sharp curveball in low minors.

9. Scott Kingery, 2B (22) Former University of Arizona star was a second-round pick in 2015. He has a strong overall game and has drawn comparisons to Dustin Pedroia.

10. Drew Anderson, RHP (23) Power-armed righty impressed team officials in return from Tommy John surgery in 2016. He's ready for a test at Double-A.

WASHINGTON NATIONALS

Were the 95-win Washington Nationals of 2016 victims of the cruel, crapshoot mentality of October, or were they just flawed enough to lose in the NLDS to Los Angeles? That question hung over their offseason, and it hangs over them again as 2017 arrives. Their relative lack of free-agent activity suggests they believe the former, but their failed pursuit of ace lefty Chris Sale, and the subsequent trade for center fielder Adam Eaton — which cost the Nationals three top pitching prospects — suggests something else.

In the short term, the Nationals have a chance in 2017 to be even better than last year's version, with Eaton patrolling center field, dynamic leadoff hitter Trea Turner at his natural position of shortstop and a rotation headed by Max Scherzer and Stephen Strasburg. But the long-term vision of the team's ownership and front office will also be tested. Bryce Harper's looming free agency at the end of 2018 colors the decision-making process, and signs are already in evidence that the Nationals expect to lose him. Potentially facing a two-year window before Harper is gone, the Nats have a growing sense of urgency.

ROTATION The Nationals considered their pursuit of Sale a one-off deal. They didn't view themselves as needing a starting pitcher — not with a rotation of Scherzer, Strasburg, Tanner Roark, Joe Ross and Gio Gonzalez — but when the White Sox's ace lefty became available, they were prepared to mortgage a big chunk of their future to get him. By losing Sale to Boston, the Nationals not only failed to fulfill their dream of a super-rotation, but they also wound up sacrificing some of their 2017 rotation depth by sending prospects Lucas Giolito and Reynaldo Lopez (along with 2016 first-rounder Dane Dunning) to Chicago for Eaton. While this is still a formidable fivesome, the Nats will be praying more than most teams for good health, as the next men up in case of rotation injury (and barring any late-winter roster pick-ups) would be unproven righthanders Austin Voth and A.J. Cole.

BULLPEN The Nationals' well-earned reputation as perpetual bridesmaids in free agency got another boost this winter, as they tried but missed out on Mark Melancon (their closer for the last two months of 2016) and Kenley Jansen, two of the three elite closers on the market. Suddenly, closer had become a major issue for the Nats, one that still wasn't solved by late December. Internally, they have some good back-end arms with potential in Blake Treinen, Shawn Kelley and Koda Glover, among others, but none has big-league experience pitching the ninth. Ideally, that group would serve as the set-up committee for a proven closer. As for depth, Sammy Solis, Oliver Perez and Rafael Martin lead the group of returnees who could round out the Nationals' 2017 bullpen.

MIDDLE INFIELD If Harper indeed departs after 2018, the Nationals already have the next young star they will build around in Turner. Debuting in 2016 as the primary center fielder down the stretch, Turner was a hit-knocking, big-slugging, base-stealing revelation as an everyday leadoff hitter, posting a .342/.370./.567 line in essentially half a season. Now, after shifting him to shortstop following the trade of Danny Espinosa, the Nationals will get a better look at Turner's highly touted infield defensive skills. Turner's double-play partner, Daniel Murphy, was a revelation himself in 2016, enjoying a career year of .347/.390/.595 in his first season in D.C. and finishing second in MVP voting. While Murphy is never going to win a Gold Glove, the Nationals don't mind as long as he doesn't kill them on defense — and keeps hitting the way he did in 2016.

CORNERS Once considered the face of the franchise, Ryan Zimmerman has struggled through injuries, throwing issues and overall poor performance, to the point where he can't be counted on anymore to justify his place in the order. His OPS declined for a fourth straight year in 2016, to a paltry .642. If he gets off to another poor start, there will be cries to replace him at first base, even with $48 million still owed to him over the next three years. What Zimmerman needs is a big bounce-back year, such as the one third baseman Anthony Rendon produced in 2016, when, unlike in 2015, he stayed healthy and produced to the tune of .270/.348/.450.

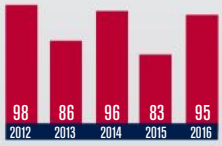
OUTFIELD The Nats' interest in Eaton was equal parts production and cost-certainty. They liked his bat; they loved his contract, which, including club options, could tie him to D.C. for five years at a cost of only $38 million. And while defensive metrics peg him as being better in the corners than in center field, the Nats believe he will excel in center, allowing them to keep Harper in right. Harper's production in 2016 took a nosedive in the second half, leading to rampant speculation that he was hurt. But at age 24, he remains the straw that stirs the drink — though the Nats would prefer the high-octane version of 2015. Meantime, left fielder Jayson Werth returns for his seventh (and presumably final) season in D.C.

2017 PREDICTION
1st
NL East

2016 RECORD
95-67

HOME: 50-31 **ROAD:** 45-36

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND



TEAM INFO

NATIONALS PARK
Opened: 2008 **Capacity:** 41,546
Left: 336' **Center:** 402' **Right:** 335'
Tickets: 202-675-NATS
washington.nationals.mlb.com

➤ FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
OF Bryce Harper

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
RHP Max Scherzer

BULL MARKET
SS Trea Turner

BEAR MARKET
OF Jayson Werth

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
RHP Stephen Strasburg

IPO RHP A.J. Cole

FUTURES MARKET OF Victor Robles

INSIDER TIP No arguments with Anthony Rendon's solid comeback in 2016, but he has another level to his game that will make him a "best buy" in most drafts.

➤ STATLINE

MANUFACTURED RUNS: 2016

1. Nationals	**173**
2. Indians	170
3. Angels	163
4. Rockies	161
5. Giants	158

Source: Baseball Info Solutions

Tom DiPace

PROJECTED LINEUP

NEXT LEVEL

LINEUP

CF	Adam Eaton (L)
SS	Trea Turner (R)
2B	Daniel Murphy (L)
RF	Bryce Harper (L)
3B	Anthony Rendon (R)
LF	**Jayson Werth (R)**
1B	Ryan Zimmerman (R)
C	Derek Norris (R)

BENCH

C	Jose Lobaton (S)
OF	Chris Heisey (R)
1B/OF	**Clint Robinson (L)**
INF	Wilmer Difo (S)
OF	Michael Taylor (R)

ROTATION

RHP	Max Scherzer
RHP	Stephen Strasburg
RHP	**Tanner Roark**
LHP	Gio Gonzalez
RHP	Joe Ross

BULLPEN

RHP	Shawn Kelley (Closer)
RHP	Blake Treinen
RHP	Koda Glover
LHP	**Sammy Solis**
LHP	Oliver Perez
RHP	Rafael Martin
RHP	Trevor Gott

Jayson Werth led baseball with 4.60 pitches per plate appearance, which was his best since 2005. In his first five seasons with the Nationals, he averaged only 4.27 pitches per plate appearance.

Clint Robinson hit 24.4 percent of his balls in play for weak contact, which would have been fifth worst in the majors had he qualified for the batting title.

Tanner Roark gave up the least amount of hard contact (24.3 percent) among all qualified starters. That helped him limit home runs — his 9.4 percent home run per fly ball rate was fifth among qualified starters.

Sammy Solis' 3.1 percent home run per fly ball rate ranked sixth among relievers with at least 40 innings.

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE NATIONALS

"This was supposed to be their moment as the power team in the NL, but it feels like the Cubs have swiped it from them. The Nats needed to make a big move and ended up with Adam Eaton, for a big price. He helps them for the short term and long term, but they'll miss all the pitching depth they gave up. Max Scherzer's as good as they come and only getting better, but Stephen Strasburg scares the heck out of me. When he talks about the slider hurting him, that's a bad sign. Gio Gonzalez is no better than a 4 or 5. Shawn Kelley's very good in that bullpen, but they need a lot more. I don't know what happened to Bryce Harper last year, but he had to be hurt. You figure he'll have a big bounce back. Yet at the same time, they'll get less and less from aging guys like Ryan Zimmerman and Jayson Werth."

STATISTICIAN

14	Pinch-hit homers by Chris Heisey since 2010, most in the majors in that span.
3	Players, since 2000, who have struck out fewer than 60 times in a season while leading the league in slugging: Barry Bonds, Albert Pujols and Daniel Murphy.
20	Batters Max Scherzer struck out on May 11, 2016, becoming just the third pitcher in history (Roger Clemens did it twice) to strike out that many in a nine-inning game.
.529	Dusty Baker's regular-season winning percentage.
.420	Baker's career winning percentage in the postseason.
763	Runs scored by the Nationals in 2016, a franchise record and fourth most in the NL last season.
51-25	Nationals' record against the NL East in 2016, the best record within its own division of any team in the majors.
32-34	The Nats' combined record against the NL Central and West.

BRYCE HARPER

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3 MIA	4	5 MIA	6 MIA	7 PHI	8 PHI
9 PHI	10 STL	11 STL	12 STL	13	14 PHI	15 PHI
16 PHI	17	18 ATL	19 ATL	20 ATL	21 NYM	22 NYM
23 NYM	24 COL	25 COL	26 COL	27 COL	28 NYM	29 NYM
30 NYM						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2 ARI	3 ARI	4 ARI	5 PHI	6 PHI
7 PHI	8 BAL	9 BAL	10 BAL	11 BAL	12 PHI	13 PHI
14 PHI	15	16 PIT	17 PIT	18 PIT	19 ATL	20 ATL
21 ATL	22	23 SEA	24 SEA	25 SEA	26 SD	27 SD
28 SD	29 SF	30 SF	31 SF			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2 OAK	3 OAK
4 OAK	5 LAD	6 LAD	7 LAD	8	9 TEX	10 TEX
11 TEX	12 ATL	13 ATL	14 ATL	15 NYM	16 NYM	17 NYM
18 NYM	19 MIA	20 MIA	21 MIA	22	23 CIN	24 CIN
25 CIN	26 CHC	27 CHC	28 CHC	29 CHC	30 STL	

July

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 STL
2 STL	3 NYM	4 NYM	5 NYM	6 ATL	7 ATL	8 ATL
9 ATL	10	11	12	13	14 CIN	15 CIN
16 CIN	17 CIN	18 LAA	19 LAA	20	21 ARI	22 ARI
23 ARI	24	25 MIL	26 MIL	27 MIL	28 COL	29 COL
30 COL	31 MIA					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 MIA	2 MIA	3	4 CHC	5 CHC
6 CHC	7 MIA	8 MIA	9 MIA	10 MIA	11 SF	12 SF
13 SF	14	15 LAA	16 LAA	17 SD	18 SD	19 SD
20 SD	21	22 HOU	23 HOU	24 HOU	25 NYM	26 NYM
27 NYM	28 MIA	29 MIA	30 MIA	31 MIL		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 MIL	2 MIL
3 MIL	4 MIA	5 MIA	6 MIA	7 PHI	8 PHI	9 PHI
10 PHI	11	12 ATL	13 ATL	14 ATL	15 LAD	16 LAD
17 LAD	18	19 ATL	20 ATL	21 ATL	22 NYM	23 NYM
24 NYM	25 PHI	26 PHI	27 PHI	28 PIT	29 PIT	30 PIT
1 PIT						

CATCHING Difficult as it was to let Wilson Ramos walk away, the Nationals could no longer count on his health following a second major knee injury in 2016. Instead, they traded for San Diego's Derek Norris, whom they expect to pair with well-regarded backup Jose Lobaton — though prospect Pedro Severino will get a look. Norris spent his first five pro seasons in the Nationals' system, before being shipped to Oakland in the Gio Gonzalez trade. He is a top-notch defender and game-caller, with advanced metrics ranking him second among catchers in the majors in defensive runs saved.

BENCH Chris Heisey turned a non-roster spring invite in 2016 into a one-year guaranteed deal for 2017. He hit nine homers, some of them huge, in just 139 at-bats, while seeing time at all three outfield positions. He will anchor a 2017 bench that should also include first baseman/corner outfielder Clint Robinson and either veteran Emmanuel Burriss or 24-year-old prospect Wilmer Difo as a utility infielder.

MANAGEMENT Mike Rizzo has batted pretty close to 1.000 on his trades since taking over the GM duties in 2009, which should have earned him the benefit of the doubt in the much-dissected Eaton trade. Yes, the cost in prospects was steep, but one suspects Rizzo has a fair degree of certainty that none will come back to haunt the Nationals. Dusty Baker proved to be an excellent hire as manager in 2016, replacing the suffocating atmosphere under Matt Williams with a looser, more player-friendly vibe.

FINAL ANALYSIS Ninety-five wins, the same number as 2016, would be a pretty good over-under for the Nationals in 2017. They shouldn't have too much trouble winning the NL East, a division they carried by eight games last year. But the question remains whether they have the firepower to get past whatever other team emerges as playoff competition in October. But success in October is fickle, and this year could be the Nats' year, if only because the law of averages says it should be.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

NO TALK ... HARPER WILL WALK One reason it seems such a fait accompli that Bryce Harper will walk away after 2018 is the lack of any direct conversations between the Nationals and agent Scott Boras about an extension. And if Harper gets to free agency — where estimates on his value generally start at around $400 million — there seems little chance of the Lerner family going that high to bring him back.

SHOW ME THE MONEY After free-agent closer Kenley Jansen re-signed with the Dodgers, it was revealed the Nationals actually offered slightly more money, but (unlike the Dodgers' offer) some of it was deferred. The Nationals have had some success in the past, as in the case of Max Scherzer, with structuring large contracts with deferred money, but Jansen apparently preferred a more immediate payout.

NO SLIDER Stephen Strasburg has vowed not to use his slider so frequently in 2017, after blaming his overreliance on the pitch for the partially torn pronator tendon he suffered last summer, which landed him on the disabled list. Strasburg will be in the first year of a seven-year $175 million contract in 2017 and has said he expects to be 100 percent healthy for spring training.

ORDER UP The makeup of the top half of the Nationals' batting order bears watching. Logically, Trea Turner is a perfect leadoff hitter, Adam Eaton is an ideal No. 2 hitter and Bryce Harper and Daniel Murphy are entrenched at No. 3 and No. 4. But Eaton, Harper and Murphy are all left-handed, which would make the Nats vulnerable to lefty relievers. Expect them to experiment with breaking the trio up during spring training, perhaps by flip-flopping Turner and Eaton at the top.

STABILITY IN CENTER Eaton is expected to become the 11th player to start in center field for the Nationals on Opening Day in the franchise's 13 seasons in D.C. Last year's starter, Ben Revere, was non-tendered. Since the franchise moved to D.C. in 2005, only Denard Span (2013-14) and Lastings Milledge (2008-09) have started back-to-back Opening Days in center field.

MIGHTY MAX Two years into Scherzer's seven-year $210 million contract, the largest in history for a pitcher, he has clearly lived up to the billing. He won the NL Cy Young Award last year by a healthy margin, and he was arguably even better the year before. Of all Scherzer's gaudy stats since arriving in D.C., the most important is the fact he has made 67 starts in two seasons.

Tom DiPace

NATIONALS ROSTER

General Manager: Mike Rizzo **Manager:** Dusty Baker **Coaches:** Dan Firova (bullpen), Bob Henley (third base), Randy Knorr (senior baseball advisor), Jacque Jones (asst. hitting), Davey Lopes (first base), Mike Maddux (pitching), Rick Schu (hitting), Chris Speier (bench)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
	Austin Adams	R-R	6-2	225	5/5/91	Arkansas (AA)	0-1	3.05	32	0	4	41.1	29	24	61
						AZL Angels (R)	0-0	3.00	2	0	0	3.0	1	0	2
22	A.J. Cole	R-R	6-5	215	1/5/92	**WASHINGTON**	**1-2**	**5.17**	**8**	**8**	**0**	**38.1**	**37**	**14**	**39**
						Syracuse (AAA)	8-8	4.26	22	22	0	124.2	131	35	109
	Jimmy Cordero	R-R	6-3	215	10/19/91	Lehigh Valley (AAA)	0-1	27.00	1	0	0	1.1	4	2	1
						Reading (AA)	1-1	3.46	11	0	1	13.0	13	1	6
						Clearwater (A)	1-1	5.63	6	0	1	8.0	8	3	5
						GCL Phillies (R)	0-0	1.93	4	0	0	4.2	2	4	7
32	Koda Glover	R-R	6-5	225	4/13/93	**WASHINGTON**	**2-0**	**5.03**	**19**	**0**	**0**	**19.2**	**15**	**7**	**16**
						Syracuse (AAA)	1-1	2.25	16	0	2	24.0	16	3	22
						Harrisburg (AA)	2-0	3.22	17	0	4	22.1	20	7	29
						Potomac (A)	0-0	0.00	7	0	2	9.2	3	4	15
47	Gio Gonzalez	R-L	6-0	205	9/19/85	**WASHINGTON**	**11-11**	**4.57**	**32**	**32**	**0**	**177.1**	**179**	**59**	**171**
26	Trevor Gott	R-R	6-0	185	8/26/92	**WASHINGTON**	**0-0**	**1.50**	**9**	**0**	**0**	**6.0**	**6**	**3**	**6**
						Syracuse (AAA)	3-3	4.35	33	0	1	39.1	44	13	31
						Auburn (A)	0-0	4.50	1	0	0	2.0	3	0	2
						GCL Nationals (R)	0-1	9.00	1	0	0	2.0	4	0	2
33	Matt Grace	L-L	6-4	215	12/14/88	**WASHINGTON**	**0-0**	**0.00**	**5**	**0**	**0**	**3.0**	**1**	**0**	**4**
						Syracuse (AAA)	1-3	2.85	35	0	1	47.1	54	9	32
						GCL Nationals (R)	1-0	3.86	3	0	0	4.2	2	0	4
27	Shawn Kelley	R-R	6-2	230	4/26/84	**WASHINGTON**	**3-2**	**2.64**	**67**	**0**	**7**	**58.0**	**41**	**11**	**80**
53	Rafael Martin	R-R	6-3	225	5/16/84	**WASHINGTON**	**0-0**	**2.45**	**8**	**0**	**0**	**3.2**	**0**	**1**	**5**
						Syracuse (AAA)	2-4	4.56	50	0	22	49.1	43	25	50
46	Oliver Perez	L-L	6-3	225	8/15/81	**WASHINGTON**	**2-3**	**4.95**	**64**	**0**	**0**	**40.0**	**38**	**20**	**46**
57	Tanner Roark	R-R	6-2	235	10/5/86	**WASHINGTON**	**16-10**	**2.83**	**34**	**33**	**0**	**210.0**	**173**	**73**	**172**
41	Joe Ross	R-R	6-4	225	5/21/93	**WASHINGTON**	**7-5**	**3.43**	**19**	**19**	**0**	**105.0**	**108**	**29**	**93**
						Syracuse (AAA)	0-2	4.35	4	4	0	10.1	14	1	9
						Hagerstown (A)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	3.0	2	0	3
31	Max Scherzer	R-R	6-3	210	7/27/84	**WASHINGTON**	**20-7**	**2.96**	**34**	**34**	**0**	**228.1**	**165**	**56**	**284**
36	Sammy Solis	R-L	6-5	250	8/10/88	**WASHINGTON**	**2-4**	**2.41**	**37**	**0**	**0**	**41.0**	**31**	**21**	**47**
						Syracuse (AAA)	0-0	1.00	6	0	0	9.0	5	3	14
						Potomac (A)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.0	1	0	3
						Hagerstown (A)	0-0	9.00	1	0	0	1.0	1	0	1
37	Stephen Strasburg	R-R	6-4	235	7/20/88	**WASHINGTON**	**15-4**	**3.60**	**24**	**24**	**0**	**147.2**	**119**	**44**	**183**
45	Blake Treinen	R-R	6-5	225	6/30/88	**WASHINGTON**	**4-1**	**2.28**	**73**	**0**	**1**	**67.0**	**51**	**31**	**63**
	Austin Voth	R-R	6-2	215	6/26/92	Syracuse (AAA)	7-9	3.15	27	25	0	157.0	138	57	133

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
64	Spencer Kieboom	R-R	6-0	210	3/16/91	**WASHINGTON**	**.000**	**1**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**
						Harrisburg (AA)	.230	94	309	27	71	5	31	43	61	0
59	Jose Lobaton	S-R	6-1	205	10/21/84	**WASHINGTON**	**.232**	**39**	**99**	**10**	**23**	**3**	**8**	**12**	**18**	**0**
						Syracuse (AAA)	.385	3	13	1	5	0	1	1	6	1
	Derek Norris	R-R	6-0	230	2/14/89	**SAN DIEGO**	**.186**	**125**	**415**	**50**	**77**	**14**	**42**	**36**	**139**	**9**
	Raudy Read	R-R	6-0	170	10/29/93	Potomac (A)	.262	101	386	54	101	9	51	31	53	6
29	Pedro Severino	R-R	6-0	215	7/20/93	**WASHINGTON**	**.321**	**16**	**28**	**6**	**9**	**2**	**4**	**5**	**3**	**0**
						Syracuse (AAA)	.271	82	291	25	79	2	21	19	45	3

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	Emmanuel Burriss	S-R	6-0	190	1/17/85	**PHILADELPHIA**	**.111**	**39**	**45**	**3**	**5**	**0**	**0**	**2**	**10**	**1**
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	.263	50	175	21	46	0	13	9	25	6
1	Wilmer Difo	S-R	5-11	200	4/2/92	**WASHINGTON**	**.276**	**31**	**58**	**14**	**16**	**1**	**7**	**8**	**12**	**3**
						Syracuse (AAA)	.200	1	5	0	1	0	0	0	2	0
						Harrisburg (AA)	.259	104	410	59	106	6	41	34	59	28
	Jose Marmolejos	L-L	6-1	185	1/2/93	Harrisburg (AA)	.299	33	127	15	38	2	15	5	29	0
						Potomac (A)	.286	103	378	72	108	11	59	59	84	2
20	Daniel Murphy	L-R	6-1	220	4/1/85	**WASHINGTON**	**.347**	**142**	**531**	**88**	**184**	**25**	**104**	**35**	**57**	**5**
6	Anthony Rendon	R-R	6-1	210	6/6/90	**WASHINGTON**	**.270**	**156**	**567**	**91**	**153**	**20**	**85**	**65**	**117**	**12**
25	Clint Robinson	L-L	6-5	240	2/16/85	**WASHINGTON**	**.235**	**104**	**196**	**16**	**46**	**5**	**26**	**20**	**38**	**0**
	Matt Skole	L-R	6-4	220	7/30/89	Syracuse (AAA)	.244	140	499	67	122	24	78	66	119	2
7	Trea Turner	R-R	6-1	185	6/30/93	**WASHINGTON**	**.342**	**73**	**307**	**53**	**105**	**13**	**40**	**14**	**59**	**33**
						Syracuse (AAA)	.302	83	331	61	100	6	33	37	72	25
11	Ryan Zimmerman	R-R	6-3	225	9/28/84	**WASHINGTON**	**.218**	**115**	**427**	**60**	**93**	**15**	**46**	**29**	**104**	**4**
						Syracuse (AAA)	.500	3	12	3	6	1	3	1	3	0
						Potomac (A)	.417	3	12	4	5	1	5	0	4	0

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	Rafael Bautista	R-R	6-2	165	3/8/93	Harrisburg (AA)	.282	136	543	77	153	4	39	45	94	56
	Adam Eaton	L-L	5-8	185	12/6/88	**CHICAGO AL**	**.284**	**157**	**619**	**91**	**176**	**14**	**59**	**63**	**115**	**14**
48	Brian Goodwin	L-R	6-0	205	11/2/90	**WASHINGTON**	**.286**	**22**	**42**	**1**	**12**	**0**	**5**	**2**	**14**	**0**
						Syracuse (AAA)	.280	119	436	51	122	14	68	46	106	15
34	Bryce Harper	L-R	6-3	215	10/16/92	**WASHINGTON**	**.243**	**147**	**506**	**84**	**123**	**24**	**86**	**108**	**117**	**21**
14	Chris Heisey	R-R	6-1	220	12/14/84	**WASHINGTON**	**.216**	**83**	**139**	**18**	**30**	**9**	**17**	**13**	**44**	**0**
3	Michael Taylor	R-R	6-3	210	3/26/91	**WASHINGTON**	**.231**	**76**	**221**	**28**	**51**	**7**	**16**	**14**	**77**	**14**
						Syracuse (AAA)	.205	31	117	17	24	1	9	12	33	7
28	Jayson Werth	R-R	6-5	235	5/20/79	**WASHINGTON**	**.244**	**143**	**525**	**84**	**128**	**21**	**69**	**71**	**139**	**5**

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

CARTER KIEBOOM, SS

It had been five years since the Nationals last drafted a position player with their top pick, and that one — Anthony Rendon in 2011 — turned out pretty well. Kieboom, a high schooler out of Georgia taken with the 28th overall pick, has a long way to go to reach the big leagues, let alone make an impact similar to Rendon's. The Nationals' farm system is loaded with talented shortstops, from 24-year-old Wilmer Difo to 16-year-old Luis Garcia, but Kieboom, the brother of the Nationals' Double-A catcher Spencer, had a promising start to his career in rookie ball last summer and possesses both the defensive tools to stay at shortstop and the bat to be an impact hitter. At 6'2", 190 pounds, with plenty of power, he could also be a candidate to move to third base eventually. Either way, it's unlikely Kieboom reaches the majors before 2019, but he does have the talent to move quickly.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Victor Robles, OF (19) Toolsy center fielder kept up his rapid rise by excelling at both Low-A and High-A. Not out of the question for him to be in D.C. at some point in 2018.

2. Erick Fedde, RHP (24) Second year back from Tommy John surgery was a big step forward, with a strong showing in High-A and five promising starts in Double-A.

3. Carter Kieboom, SS (19) First-rounder in 2016 will likely start 2017 at Low-A Hagerstown. Organizational depth at shortstop could portend a future move to third base.

4. Juan Soto, OF (18) Nats signed him for a franchise-record $1.5 million, and eye-popping stats in his first pro season (.368/.420/.553) made him a potential bargain.

5. Andrew Stevenson, OF (22) Second-round pick in 2015 is a defensive wizard in center field and a good contact hitter at the plate.

6. Koda Glover, RHP (23) His big fastball and quick progression earned him a stint in the Nats' bullpen in 2016, and he could be a key contributor there in 2017.

7. Luis Garcia, SS (16) Left-handed-hitting Dominican got a $1.3 million bonus last summer and has yet to play pro ball, but scouts love his athleticism and projectable body.

8. Austin Voth, RHP (24) Fifth-rounder in 2013 has three MLB-ready pitches and is a back-of-the-rotation candidate in 2017.

9. Wilmer Difo, SS (25) A natural shortstop with surprising power, he is in line to compete for the Nats' utility infield job in 2017.

10. Pedro Severino, C (23) Has never hit much but is considered one of top defensive catchers in all the minors and could have a long MLB career as a backup.

CHICAGO CUBS

There will be no more talk about curses or droughts. The Cubs are just another champion looking to defend their title now, but with their young core, they're in a better position to do so than any team since the 2009 Phillies. The years of losing to which Theo Epstein, Jed Hoyer, Jason McLeod and the rest of the front office committed themselves when they arrived in late 2011 (which turned out to be relatively few) now seem more than worth it. With a half-dozen potential All-Stars in their lineup and a pitching staff toward which the team diverted most of its resources this winter, the Cubs remain at least the co-favorites to win the NL pennant in 2017.

ROTATION Jon Lester, Kyle Hendricks, and Jake Arrieta return for a third season together at the front of the rotation. Lester and Hendricks were Cy Young finalists in 2016, and Arrieta has enjoyed a three-season run as one of the NL's top five starters, but there are creeping concerns with all three. Lester loses personal catcher David Ross, whose influence over the ace lefty was greater than perhaps any other backstop's influence over a single pitcher in recent seasons. Hendricks dominates with excellent command, but his durability is somewhat questionable, and whenever that command falters, he's vulnerable. Arrieta battled command problems that grew out of his complex delivery for long stretches last season. Behind that trio stand John Lackey, who remains a workhorse and one of the league's fiercest competitors, and Mike Montgomery, the oversized lefty for whose sake the team declined an affordable option on oversized righty Jason Hammel.

BULLPEN Whatever issues the bullpen might have, depth is not among them. This is a group five years in the making. There's former Rule 5 Draft find Hector Rondon, buy-low trade acquisition Pedro Strop, then the guys who are products of considerably higher-stakes investments: Carl Edwards Jr. and Justin Grimm, who were at the heart of the Matt Garza trade, and Wade Davis, the capstone of this towering pyramid, for whom the team traded the final four years of their control over promising slugger Jorge Soler. That group, along with the low-risk arms who will fill in the space in front of them, can really shorten the game. Edwards, Strop, Rondon and Davis form a particularly intimidating potential parade of power stuff and wicked breaking balls.

MIDDLE INFIELD Addison Russell will be 23 years old all season but already has nearly two full seasons of experience. He's still an interesting work in progress at the plate, with a generally patient approach and great power for a shortstop; but his strikeout rate has remained higher than his scouting report and minor-league track record foretold. Even if he can't make more contact, though, he's a budding star. To watch him play shortstop is a privilege worth the price of admission. Second base will be a more open issue. Javier Baez started there in every postseason game, but Ben Zobrist will take occasional reps, and top prospect Ian Happ could be a valuable midseason addition if injury or underperformance befalls any incumbent infielder. Baez, with lightning-quick hands, explosive athleticism, and the best infield arm in the National League, can play on the left side of the infield whenever needed.

CORNERS After Ernie Banks moved to first base in 1962, the Cubs had one Hall of Famer (Ron Santo) throwing across the diamond to another for roughly a decade. Neither Kris Bryant nor Anthony Rizzo has punched his ticket for Cooperstown just yet, but both sluggers are young, well-rounded, and among the five best players in the league at their positions. In fact, they might be better compared to the tandem of Aramis Ramirez and Derrek Lee, who manned the corners for the Cubs' last run of good teams (from 2004-09). Alas, one of those two was often hurt, and the Cubs lacked the depth to keep winning without their lineup and infield anchors. The only thing that might stop Bryant and Rizzo from becoming the best corner infield pairing in team history is the lurking risk of injury, but the good news is that if that does happen, this iteration is much better prepared to weather the storm.

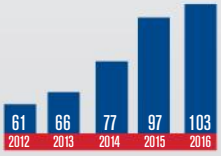
OUTFIELD Albert Almora has drawn raves for his swagger, for his instincts in center field and on the bases, and for his ability to make solid contact consistently. He's an impatient hitter, though, and lacks the huge tools to make up for that lack of plate discipline. Someone else will draw the duty of replacing Dexter Fowler's .393 OBP at the top of the batting order, but Almora and journeyman free-agent signee Jon Jay will have to provide steady defense without creating a black hole at the bottom of it. With World Series hero and Midwestern demigod Kyle Schwarber returning from a torn ACL and likely to be at full strength by the start of spring training, the Cubs hope they won't miss Soler in left field. Zobrist should see a lot of time in right, allowing Baez a chance to win the full-time second base job. That leaves no clear starting role for Jason Heyward.

2017 PREDICTION
1st
NL Central

2016 RECORD
103-58

HOME: 57-24 **ROAD:** 46-34

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND



TEAM INFO

WRIGLEY FIELD
Opened: 1914 **Capacity:** 41,118
Left: 355' **Center:** 400' **Right:** 353'
Tickets: 773-404-CUBS
chicago.cubs.mlb.com

➤ FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
3B Kris Bryant

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
LHP Jon Lester

BULL MARKET
C Willson Contreras

BEAR MARKET
OF Jason Heyward

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
RHP Wade Davis

IPO OF Albert Almora

FUTURES MARKET OF Eloy Jimenez

INSIDER TIP An embarrassment of offensive riches will constrain a selection of Cubs (Bryant, Anthony Rizzo and Addison Russell excepted) to slightly below perceived value due to a lack of available starts.

➤ STATLINE

OPPONENTS WHIP: 1900-2016

1. Koji Uehara	**0.864**
2. Kenley Jansen	0.893
3. Craig Kimbrel	0.949
5. Sergio Romo	0.955
3. Addie Joss	0.968

(min. 400 IP)

Tom DiPace

PROJECTED LINEUP

LINEUP

LF	Kyle Schwarber (L)
3B	Kris Bryant (R)
1B	**Anthony Rizzo (L)**
RF	Ben Zobrist (S)
C	Willson Contreras (R)
SS	Addison Russell (R)
2B	Javier Baez (R)
CF	Albert Almora Jr. (R)

BENCH

C	**Miguel Montero (L)**
INF	Tommy La Stella (L)
OF	Jason Heyward (L)
OF	Jon Jay (L)
OF	Matt Szczur (R)

ROTATION

LHP	**Jon Lester**
RHP	Kyle Hendricks
RHP	Jake Arrieta
RHP	John Lackey
LHP	Mike Montgomery

BULLPEN

RHP	Wade Davis (Closer)
RHP	Hector Rondon
RHP	Pedro Strop
RHP	**Carl Edwards Jr.**
RHP	Koji Uehara
RHP	Justin Grimm
LHP	Brian Duensing

NEXT LEVEL

Anthony Rizzo has eclipsed the 30-home run mark each of the past three seasons, joining David Ortiz, Edwin Encarnacion and Nelson Cruz as the only players to do so.

Miguel Montero led catchers with 2.8 percent Called Strikes Above Average, which added 15.2 runs from framing pitches.

Jon Lester had a career-low 2.44 ERA in part because of a career-best 84.9 percent strand rate. His strand rate went up 13.1 points from 2015 and 6.8 points from his previous career high in 2011.

Carl Edwards Jr.'s 37.7 percent strikeout rate was second among National League pitchers with at least 35 innings.

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE CUBS

"Really, there are no weaknesses here. What's so frustrating is that they're not only the best team, but they've got control of young, productive players for a long time. They're so deep that you'll see a starter on the bench every day, and Joe Maddon will find a way to keep everyone happy. They'll miss David Ross in the clubhouse, but Willson Contreras can really hit. Their rotation last year was probably as good as it can be, and with Jake Arrieta in his walk year, you wonder what happens if he gets off to a slow start and it looks like he's costing himself money. Wade Davis is a little bit of a question mark because of the forearm problem last summer, but if he's not healthy, they can always go get what they need at the deadline. There are ninth-inning, high-leverage guys available every July, and we know the Cubs will be aggressive."

STATISTICIAN

23.3	Wins Above Replacement accrued by Kris Bryant, Anthony Rizzo, Addison Russell, Javier Baez, Willson Contreras, Albert Almora and Kyle Schwarber in 2016, according to FanGraphs, more than all but five other teams got from their entire squads of position players.
.807	Chicago's winning percentage (88 wins in 109 games) when tied or leading after five innings. The league as a whole had a .736 winning percentage in such games.
.408	Schwarber's on-base percentage over his 958 pro plate appearances, at all levels.
12	Percentage of opponents' balls in play against Cubs pitching marked as hard-hit by Inside Edge, the lowest in MLB for 2016.
6.38	Baseball Prospectus' Park Adjusted Defensive Efficiency figure for the 2016 Cubs, the highest number since 1950.

KRIS BRYANT

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2 STL	3	4 STL	5 STL	6	7 MIL	8 MIL
9 MIL	10 LAD	11	12 LAD	13 LAD	14 PIT	15 PIT
16 PIT	17 MIL	18 MIL	19 MIL	20	21 CIN	22 CIN
23 CIN	24 PIT	25 PIT	26 PIT	27	28 BOS	29 BOS
30 BOS						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 PHI	2 PHI	3 PHI	4 PHI	5 NYY	6 NYY
7 NYY	8 COL	9 COL	10 COL	11	12 STL	13 STL
14 STL	15	16 CIN	17 CIN	18 CIN	19 MIL	20 MIL
21 MIL	22 SF	23 SF	24 SF	25 SF	26 LAD	27 LAD
28 LAD	29 SD	30 SD	31 SD			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2 STL	3 STL
4 STL	5 MIA	6 MIA	7 MIA	8 COL	9 COL	10 COL
11 COL	12 NYM	13 NYM	14 NYM	15	16 PIT	17 PIT
18 PIT	19 SD	20 SD	21 SD	22 MIA	23 MIA	24 MIA
25 MIA	26 WAS	27 WAS	28 WAS	29 WAS	30 CIN	

July

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 CIN
2 CIN	3	4 TB	5 TB	6	7 PIT	8 PIT
9 PIT	10	11	12	13	14 BAL	15 BAL
16 BAL	17 ATL	18 ATL	19 ATL	20	21 STL	22 STL
23 STL	24 CWS	25 CWS	26 CWS	27 CWS	28 MIL	29 MIL
30 MIL	31					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 ARI	2 ARI	3 ARI	4 WAS	5 WAS
6 WAS	7 SF	8 SF	9 SF	10	11 ARI	12 ARI
13 ARI	14 CIN	15 CIN	16 CIN	17 CIN	18 TOR	19 TOR
20 TOR	21	22 CIN	23 CIN	24 CIN	25 PHI	26 PHI
27 PHI	28 PIT	29 PIT	30 PIT	31 ATL		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 ATL	2 ATL
3 ATL	4 PIT	5 PIT	6 PIT	7 PIT	8 MIL	9 MIL
10 MIL	11	12 NYM	13 NYM	14 NYM	15 STL	16 STL
17 STL	18	19 TB	20 TB	21 MIL	22 MIL	23 MIL
24 MIL	25 STL	26 STL	27 STL	28 STL	29 CIN	30 CIN
1 CIN						

ANTHONY RIZZO

CATCHING Willson Contreras is one of the best mistake hitters in baseball, capable of hitting the ball 450 feet when a pitcher grooves one. He's also blessed with great hand-eye coordination and projects to hit for average as he settles into a full-time role. Add to that uncommon speed, a high-powered arm, and an intensity that makes it hard to tear your eyes away from him, and all the pieces of a star catcher are there. What Contreras doesn't offer is subtle value, and that's where Miguel Montero comes in. One of the best pitch framers in the game, Montero steals strikes for his pitchers.

BENCH No team managed by Joe Maddon truly has a bench. Everyone is three innings or less from the next time Maddon might call upon them, and few players go more than 10 games without getting a spot start. With prospects Jeimer Candelario, Ian Happ and Mark Zagunis on the doorstep of the majors, that figures to be true in 2017 as well.

MANAGEMENT Despite a few key mistakes in the World Series, Maddon is a good tactical manager whose willingness to flout convention provides an occasional mathematical advantage and engenders looseness during close games. More important, he leads one of the league's best coaching staffs. Cubs players receive excellent instruction, and the information gathered and generated by the front office flows freely to the field. The clubhouse culture has been an asset each season under Maddon.

FINAL ANALYSIS Last season, the Cubs had one of the best defenses in baseball history, blending dominance of the strike zone with excellent fielding across the diamond. They'll allow more runs in 2017, but with a healthy season from Schwarber and continued development from other young hitters, they might also score more. Few teams are bulletproof, and fewer still immune to the vagaries of baseball's long season and the thin margins that decide most games. Still, there's no reason to predict anything other than a second straight NL Central title for this group.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

THE WALLS ARE CLOSING IN Wrigley Field continues to undergo offseason renovations. This winter, that meant (among other things) removing the bullpens from their 100-year homes down the foul lines. Outfielders and overzealous shortstops trying to steal outs on foul flares will no longer have to navigate the treacherous terrain of the bullpen mounds, but with new premium seating replacing them, they might have to dive headlong into someone's buffalo chicken fries.

THE YOUNG AND THE TRUSTLESS Joe Maddon is known as a player's manager and the quintessential clubhouse diplomat, but it's worth noting that over his two seasons in Chicago, his inconsistent communication and uneven treatment of players he didn't trust in certain situations have raised some questions about his style. Miguel Montero, Jason Hammel, Chris Coghlan, Tommy La Stella, Hector Rondon and Pedro Strop all have had their feathers ruffled to some degree by their manager's fluid faith in them.

CENTER STAGE In center field, there could be a lot of mixing and matching to do. Albert Almora and John Jay will be the main handlers of the position, but the better Jason Heyward hits, the more he might force his way into the picture. Kris Bryant, too, has played there occasionally in the past and has all the tools to do so more often if needed.

THE SEARCH CONTINUES Rumors have swirled for years now that the Cubs would eventually cash in some of their excess prospect capital for a dominant starting pitcher with youth and years of team control remaining. Chicago's farm system remains relatively strong, considering all the young players already making major contributions to the parent club, so that big trade for Tampa Bay's Chris Archer or Atlanta's Julio Teheran could still be right around the corner.

KINGS OF THE LITTLE THINGS Some of the Cubs' youngsters are among the best in baseball at little things that can have big value. Anthony Rizzo's footwork and quick hands around first base save Cubs fielders some errors and help them steal occasional outs. Javier Baez applies quicker tags than any other middle infielder in modern memory. Kris Bryant might be the most sneakily valuable, though. His baserunning brilliance was on display during Game 7 of the World Series last fall, when he scored from third on a shallow fly and from first base on a long single. His long strides, quick and true reads on hits, tight turns and hard, low slides make him dangerous on the bases.

Tom DiPace

CUBS ROSTER

General Manager: Jed Hoyer **Manager:** Joe Maddon **Coaches:** Henry Blanco (quality control), Mike Borzello (catching), Chris Bosio (pitching), Eric Hinske (asst. hitting), Brandon Hyde (first base), Gary Jones (third base), John Mallee (hitting), Dave Martinez (bench), Lester Strode (bullpen)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
49	Jake Arrieta	R-R	6-4	225	3/6/86	**CHICAGO NL**	**18-8**	**3.10**	**31**	**31**	**0**	**197.1**	**138**	**76**	**190**
13	Aaron Brooks	R-R	6-4	225	4/27/90	Iowa (AAA)	1-1	7.71	5	4	0	16.1	23	4	12
43	Jake Buchanan	R-R	6-0	223	9/24/89	**CHICAGO NL**	**1-0**	**1.50**	**2**	**1**	**0**	**6.0**	**3**	**1**	**4**
						Iowa (AAA)	12-8	4.34	24	22	0	141.0	154	38	105
	Wade Davis	R-R	6-5	225	9/7/85	**KANSAS CITY**	**2-1**	**1.87**	**45**	**0**	**27**	**43.1**	**33**	**16**	**47**
						Omaha (AAA)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	2.0	2	0	3
						AZL Royals (R)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.0	1	0	1
	Brian Duensing	L-L	6-0	200	2/22/83	**BALTIMORE**	**1-0**	**4.05**	**14**	**0**	**0**	**13.1**	**13**	**3**	**10**
						Norfolk (AAA)	0-0	0.00	3	0	0	3.0	4	0	6
						Bowie (AA)	0-0	1.29	3	0	0	7.0	5	1	7
						GCL Orioles (R)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	2.0	2	0	2
						Omaha (AAA)	1-0	3.10	12	0	2	20.1	16	5	19
6	Carl Edwards Jr.	R-R	6-3	170	9/3/91	**CHICAGO NL**	**0-1**	**3.75**	**36**	**0**	**2**	**36.0**	**15**	**14**	**52**
						Iowa (AAA)	1-1	4.26	24	0	1	25.1	17	17	35
52	Justin Grimm	R-R	6-3	210	8/16/88	**CHICAGO NL**	**2-1**	**4.10**	**68**	**0**	**0**	**52.2**	**47**	**23**	**65**
						Iowa (AAA)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.0	1	0	3
28	Kyle Hendricks	R-R	6-3	190	12/7/89	**CHICAGO NL**	**16-8**	**2.13**	**31**	**30**	**0**	**190.0**	**142**	**44**	**170**
80	Pierce Johnson	R-R	6-3	200	5/10/91	Iowa (AAA)	4-6	6.14	22	11	0	63.0	60	43	75
41	John Lackey	R-R	6-6	235	10/23/78	**CHICAGO NL**	**11-8**	**3.35**	**29**	**29**	**0**	**188.1**	**146**	**53**	**180**
51	Jack Leathersich	R-L	6-0	205	7/14/90	Iowa (AAA)	0-0	0.00	5	0	0	5.0	0	6	6
						Tennessee (AA)	0-0	3.48	11	0	0	10.1	11	4	12
						Mesa (R)	1-0	1.13	10	1	0	8.0	4	3	16
34	Jon Lester	L-L	6-4	240	1/7/84	**CHICAGO NL**	**19-5**	**2.44**	**32**	**32**	**0**	**202.2**	**154**	**52**	**197**
38	Mike Montgomery	L-L	6-5	215	7/1/89	**CHICAGO NL**	**1-1**	**2.82**	**17**	**5**	**0**	**38.1**	**30**	**20**	**38**
						SEATTLE	**3-4**	**2.34**	**32**	**2**	**0**	**61.2**	**49**	**18**	**54**
60	Felix Pena	R-R	6-2	186	2/25/90	**CHICAGO NL**	**0-0**	**4.00**	**11**	**0**	**1**	**9.0**	**5**	**3**	**13**
						Iowa (AAA)	3-4	3.41	36	0	3	63.1	46	23	81
	David Rollins	L-L	6-1	210	12/21/89	**SEATTLE**	**1-0**	**7.71**	**11**	**0**	**0**	**9.1**	**12**	**7**	**6**
						Tacoma (AAA)	5-0	3.77	37	0	2	45.1	39	6	32
56	Hector Rondon	R-R	6-3	230	2/26/88	**CHICAGO NL**	**2-3**	**3.53**	**54**	**0**	**18**	**51.0**	**42**	**8**	**58**
	Jose Rosario	R-R	6-1	170	8/29/90	Iowa (AAA)	1-1	2.95	22	0	5	21.1	26	6	18
						Tennessee (AA)	0-0	2.76	11	0	4	16.1	11	3	15
						Myrtle Beach (A)	1-0	1.65	12	0	5	16.1	15	8	14
	Caleb Smith	R-L	6-2	205	7/28/91	Trenton (AA)	3-5	3.96	27	7	3	63.2	66	20	70
46	Pedro Strop	R-R	6-1	220	6/13/85	**CHICAGO NL**	**2-2**	**2.85**	**54**	**0**	**0**	**47.1**	**27**	**15**	**60**
	Koji Uehara	R-R	6-2	195	4/3/75	**BOSTON**	**2-3**	**3.45**	**50**	**0**	**7**	**47.0**	**34**	**11**	**63**
	Duane Underwood Jr.	R-R	6-2	210	7/20/94	Tennessee (AA)	0-5	4.91	13	13	0	58.2	66	31	46
						Myrtle Beach (A)	0-0	1.93	1	1	0	4.2	3	0	2
						South Bend (A)	0-1	2.08	3	3	0	8.2	5	4	12
						Mesa (R)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	1.0	1	0	2
29	Rob Zastryzny	R-L	6-3	205	3/26/92	**CHICAGO NL**	**1-0**	**1.13**	**8**	**1**	**0**	**16.0**	**12**	**5**	**17**
						Iowa (AAA)	7-3	4.33	15	14	0	81.0	67	31	77
						Tennessee (AA)	3-2	4.28	9	9	0	54.2	50	20	42

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	Victor Caratini	S-R	6-1	205	8/17/93	Tennessee (AA)	.291	115	412	57	120	6	47	54	80	2
40	Willson Contreras	R-R	6-1	212	5/13/92	**CHICAGO NL**	**.282**	**76**	**252**	**33**	**71**	**12**	**35**	**26**	**67**	**2**
						Iowa (AAA)	.353	55	204	40	72	9	43	28	32	4
47	Miguel Montero	L-R	5-11	210	7/9/83	**CHICAGO NL**	**.216**	**86**	**241**	**33**	**52**	**8**	**33**	**38**	**58**	**1**
						Iowa (AAA)	.200	3	10	0	2	0	2	0	3	0

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
9	Javier Baez	R-R	6-0	190	12/1/92	**CHICAGO NL**	**.273**	**142**	**421**	**50**	**115**	**14**	**59**	**15**	**108**	**12**
						Iowa (AAA)	.267	4	15	3	4	1	1	0	4	1
17	Kris Bryant	R-R	6-5	215	1/4/92	**CHICAGO NL**	**.292**	**155**	**603**	**121**	**176**	**39**	**102**	**75**	**154**	**8**
7	Jeimer Candelario	S-R	6-1	180	11/24/93	**CHICAGO NL**	**.091**	**5**	**11**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**2**	**5**	**0**
						Iowa (AAA)	.333	76	264	44	88	9	54	38	53	0
						Tennessee (AA)	.219	56	210	30	46	4	23	32	46	0
2	Tommy La Stella	L-R	5-11	173	1/31/89	**CHICAGO NL**	**.270**	**74**	**148**	**17**	**40**	**2**	**11**	**18**	**27**	**0**
						Iowa (AAA)	.273	12	44	6	12	1	3	2	9	0
						Tennessee (AA)	.500	2	4	1	2	0	0	2	0	0
44	Anthony Rizzo	L-L	6-3	240	8/8/89	**CHICAGO NL**	**.292**	**155**	**583**	**94**	**170**	**32**	**109**	**74**	**108**	**3**
27	Addison Russell	R-R	6-0	200	1/23/94	**CHICAGO NL**	**.238**	**151**	**525**	**67**	**125**	**21**	**95**	**55**	**135**	**5**

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
5	Albert Almora Jr.	R-R	6-2	190	4/16/94	**CHICAGO NL**	**.277**	**47**	**112**	**14**	**31**	**3**	**14**	**5**	**20**	**0**
						Iowa (AAA)	.303	80	320	46	97	4	43	9	44	10
	Jacob Hannemann	L-L	6-0	205	4/29/91	Tennessee (AA)	.247	74	291	37	72	10	30	25	55	26
22	Jason Heyward	L-L	6-5	240	8/9/89	**CHICAGO NL**	**.230**	**142**	**530**	**61**	**122**	**7**	**49**	**54**	**93**	**11**
30	Jon Jay	L-L	5-11	195	3/15/85	**SAN DIEGO**	**.291**	**90**	**347**	**49**	**101**	**2**	**26**	**19**	**78**	**2**
12	Kyle Schwarber	L-R	6-0	235	3/5/93	**CHICAGO NL**	**.000**	**2**	**4**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**2**	**0**
20	Matt Szczur	R-R	6-0	200	7/20/89	**CHICAGO NL**	**.259**	**107**	**185**	**30**	**48**	**5**	**24**	**13**	**39**	**2**
						Tennessee (AA)	.000	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0
18	Ben Zobrist	S-R	6-3	210	5/26/81	**CHICAGO NL**	**.272**	**147**	**523**	**94**	**142**	**18**	**76**	**96**	**82**	**6**

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

THOMAS HATCH, RHP

After signing Jason Heyward and John Lackey, then unexpectedly bringing back Dexter Fowler last February, the Cubs were left without a pick in the first two rounds of the 2016 MLB Draft. When they finally did get to make a selection at the end of the third round, they settled on Oklahoma State righthander Thomas Hatch. His heavy workload led Hatch to spend the summer doing conditioning work and resting up, rather than getting his feet wet against professional hitters. With a fastball that can wander up into the mid-90s and a solid slider, Hatch should be able to use his advanced approach to pitching to get moving quickly in the minors. If all goes to plan, he could be a mid-rotation starter. It's more likely that he'll be looking for a high-leverage bullpen role within a year or two.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Eloy Jimenez, OF (20) The big 2013 Dominican signee won the Midwest League MVP in 2016 as a teenager. If he pans out, he's a future middle-of-the-order masher.

2. Ian Happ, 2B/OF (22) A strong showing in the Arizona Fall League capped a season that saw Happ reach Double-A. He's a versatile switch-hitter who does a lot of things well.

3. Albert Almora Jr., CF (22) Almora's brilliant defensive and baserunning instincts were on display during the Cubs' playoff run, and he's the likely starting center fielder.

4. Dylan Cease, RHP (21) Tommy John surgery bruised Cease's draft stock in 2014, but he's flashed triple-digit heat and an above-average breaking ball.

5. Trevor Clifton, RHP (22) With three solid pitches and good command, Clifton took a huge step forward in 2016. Given health and a good spring, he will open 2017 in Double-A.

6. Jeimer Candelario, 3B (23) He's a switch-hitter with a polished approach and a modicum of power, and he has answered some of scouts' initial questions about his ability to handle third base defensively.

7. Mark Zagunis, OF (24) On-base skills are the headline for Zagunis, who's reached base almost 41 percent of the time in his career.

8. Oscar De La Cruz, RHP (22) Though a late bloomer, De La Cruz has the size and the stuff to create buzz in a hurry and move quickly through the minors.

9. Victor Caratini, C (23) If he can remain behind the plate, the switch-hitting Caratini will have legitimate value.

10. Donnie Dewees, OF (23) The second-round pick in 2015 can do a little of everything, though perhaps not enough of any one thing to emerge as a star.

CINCINNATI REDS

2017 PREDICTION
4th
NL Central

2016 RECORD
68-94

HOME: 38-43 **ROAD:** 30-51

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

TEAM INFO

GREAT AMERICAN BALL PARK
Opened: 2003 **Capacity:** 42,271
Left: 328′ **Center:** 404′ **Right:** 325′
Tickets: 877-647-7337

➤ FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
1B Joey Votto

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
RHP Raisel Iglesias

BULL MARKET
2B Jose Peraza

BEAR MARKET
2B Brandon Phillips

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
C Devin Mesoraco

IPO LHP Amir Garrett

FUTURES MARKET OF Jesse Winker

INSIDER TIP The only pitcher with an unqualified recommendation is Iglesias, who is positioned for a breakout in any role (probably as the closer). Garrett could come on fast, though.

➤ STATLINE

% "REMOTE" DEFENSIVE PLAYS MADE: 2016

1. Billy Hamilton, Reds	**53.3**
2. Francisco Lindor, Indians	26.9
3. Andrelton Simmons, Angels	26.7
4. Welington Castillo, D'backs	25.0
5. Buster Posey, Giants	21.4

(Plays judged at having 10% or less chance of being made.)
Source: Inside Edge

The Reds are hoping the heavy lifting of the rebuilding is over and that the team can start winning again after three straight losing seasons. By winning, we're talking about flirting with .500, not contending in the National League Central with the World Champion Chicago Cubs.

The optimism is based on the way the club played the second half — the Reds were one game under .500 after the All-Star break — and the hope that all the youthful talent will continue to improve.

However, the Reds likely will head into spring training without a spot for one of their top talents, Jose Peraza, after failing to trade Brandon Phillips or Zack Cozart. The Reds tried to deal both, whom they control for only 2017. Right now, Peraza, who hit .324 overall and .355 after the All-Star break, is slated for a super-utility role.

"What my strategy is going forward building a roster is to sort of get away from eight everyday players and four bench guys," general manager Dick Williams says. "I think he fits very well into that model.

The Reds did very little before the first of the year as far as adding players. They picked catcher Stuart Turner in the Rule 5 Draft. The plan to bolster the bullpen didn't happen, although the Reds could shop on the lower end of the free-agent market as they get closer to the season.

ROTATION Four spots are set going into spring training — Homer Bailey, Anthony DeSclafani, Brandon Finnegan and Dan Straily. The Reds are hoping one of the young starters emerges to take the fifth spot. But the two top prospects, Robert Stephenson (2–3, 6.08 ERA) and Cody Reed (0–7, 7.36), are coming off disappointing seasons. Lefthander Amir Garrett, a former college basketball player, has supplanted Stephenson and Reed as a top pitching prospect on some lists. The big question is the health of Bailey. He's barely pitched the last two seasons because of elbow problems that led to surgeries. The good news is that he was able to have a normal offseason throwing program. Finnegan, a lefthander, proved that he could be a starter by going 10–11 with a 3.98 ERA over 172 innings. Straily went from a waiver claim to the team's best starter. He went 14–8 with a 3.76 ERA. DeSclafani missed the first two months with an oblique strain. He was good after returning — 9–5, 3.28 in 20 starts.

BULLPEN It can't get much worse than it was in 2016. Reds relievers led the majors in home runs allowed (103), walks (297) and runs allowed (356). The Reds are planning to use righthanders Michael Lorenzen and Raisel Iglesias in hybrid, multi-inning roles to try to shore up the back end. Both dealt with injuries last year but were effective when healthy. Lorenzen had a 2.88 ERA in 35 games, and Iglesias had a 2.53 ERA in 37 games. Righthander Blake Wood (6–5, 3.99 ERA) and lefthander Tony Cingrani (4.14 ERA, 17 saves) will fill two of the other spots. The Reds plan to use the young starters who don't make the rotation to fill out the bullpen. "To me, the candidates for that are virtually every other starter we feel confident in who doesn't make our rotation," Reds manager Bryan Price says, citing Reed, Stephenson, Sal Romano, Rookie Davis, Jackson Stephens and Tyler Mahle.

MIDDLE INFIELD The aforementioned trio of Peraza, Cozart and Phillips filling two spots could present a problem. Peraza needs to play every day for his development, but there seems to be no market for Phillips, who can reject any trade as a player with 5-and-10 rights, or Cozart. Ideally, Peraza would play full time at either second or shortstop.

CORNERS It's hard to say what was more surprising about Joey Votto's year: The fact that he was hitting .200 through May or that he hit .409 in the second half. Votto remains a major offensive threat, and he says he's happy to stay in Cincinnati throughout the rebuild. Votto also says he's disappointed in his defense and vowed to work on it in the offseason. Eugenio Suarez put up solid power numbers at third (21 home runs, 70 RBIs), but he hit only .248. The Reds would like to see him hit for more of an average.

OUTFIELD Left fielder Adam Duvall was the most pleasant surprise on the team, hitting 33 home runs and driving in 103 runs. He also played left field well enough to be a Gold Glove finalist. Scott Schebler, obtained from the Dodgers in the three-way Todd Frazier trade, hit .290 with eight home runs and 32 RBIs in 55 games as the right fielder after the Reds traded away Jay Bruce. Billy Hamilton put up good offensive numbers after a slow start. He hit .293 with a .369 on-base percentage after the All-Star break. If he could put up those types of numbers and stay healthy, the Reds would have one of the most dynamic leadoff hitters in the game. Hamilton also was a Gold Glove finalist.

CATCHING Starter Devin Mesoraco is coming off left shoulder and right hip surgery after having left hip surgery a year ago. The Reds are hoping that he can play the bulk of the games, but there's no guarantee.

Votto: Tom DiPace; Iglesias: AP Images

PROJECTED LINEUP

LINEUP

CF	**Billy Hamilton (S)**
SS	Zack Cozart (R)
1B	Joey Votto (L)
LF	Adam Duvall (R)
3B	Eugenio Suarez (R)
2B	Brandon Phillips (R)
C	Devin Mesoraco (R)
RF	Scott Schebler (L)

BENCH

C	Tucker Barnhart (S)
C	Stuart Turner (R)
INF	**Jose Peraza (R)**
OF	Steve Selsky (R)
INF	Dilson Herrera (R)

ROTATION

RHP	Homer Bailey
RHP	Anthony DeSclafani
LHP	**Brandon Finnegan**
RHP	Dan Straily
LHP	Amir Garrett

BULLPEN

RHP	Raisel Iglesias (Closer)
RHP	Michael Lorenzen
LHP	**Tony Cingrani**
RHP	Blake Wood
LHP	Cody Reed
RHP	Jumbo Diaz
LHP	Wandy Peralta

NEXT LEVEL

Billy Hamilton stole 58 bases in 64 attempts in 2016 after stealing 57 bases in 63 attempts in 2015. He is the only player during that stretch to steal at least 50 bases without being caught at least 10 times.

Jose Peraza hit for a higher average vs. RHP (.328 vs. .308) but better patience (5.3 vs. 2.0 percent walk rate) and power (.134 vs. .074 isolated power) vs. LHP.

Brandon Finnegan gave up hard contact on 35.9 percent of balls put in play, which is the second-highest rate in the National League.

Tony Cingrani got opponents to swing at only 22.4 percent of pitches outside the strike zone, which was the worst in baseball among qualified relievers.

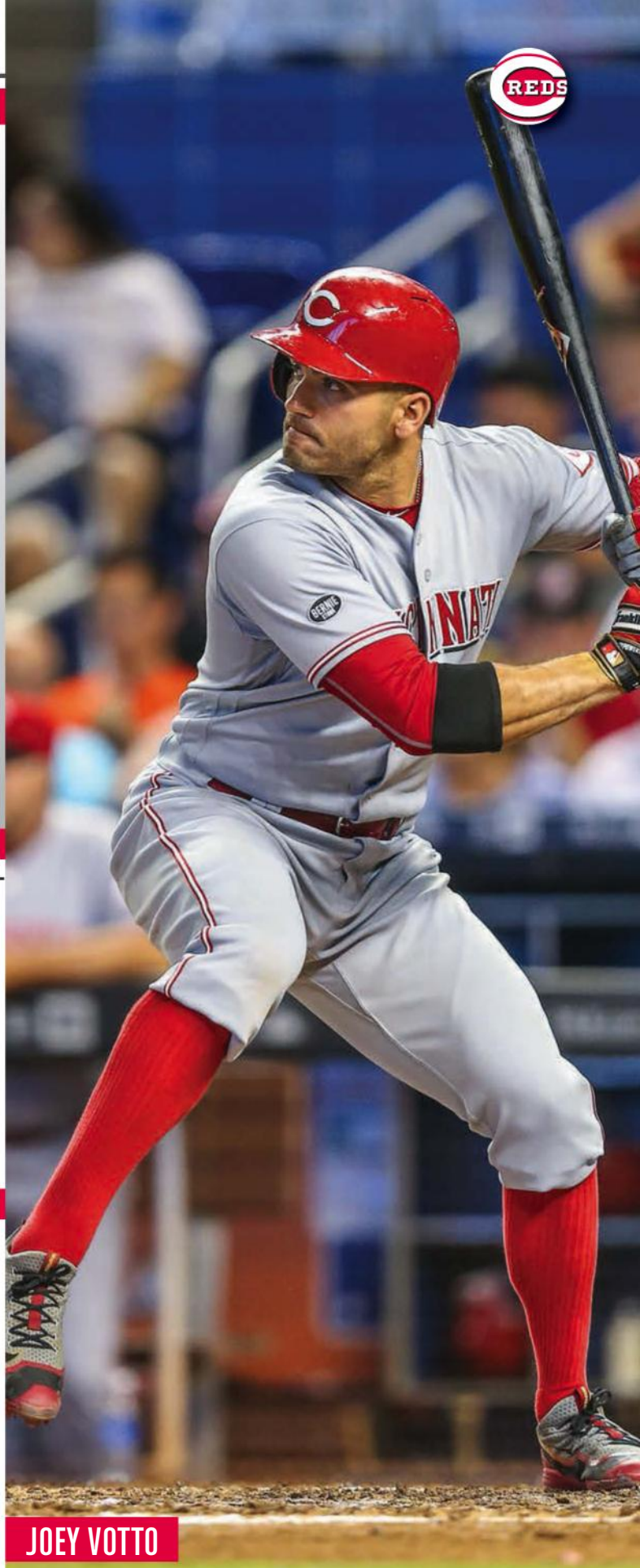
SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE REDS

"Joey Votto is a borderline Hall of Famer, a guy who really cares and truly one of the smartest players in baseball. But it's painful to watch him, too, because he's so different from the rest of that team, which is very poor. They seem to be making some smarter moves now, but not to the level of some other rebuilding teams. Guys like Dilson Herrera and Jose Peraza have bounced around a little bit, and by no means are they can't-miss prospects. But they're young and they have a chance to be above-average major leaguers. Finding out should be the Reds' priority, but they're stuck behind Brandon Phillips and Zack Cozart. Billy Hamilton had a nice second half, and he has two off-the-chart skills — speed, and because of that, defense. If he gets on base enough, he could be part of a blockbuster trade, because there's no one quite like him."

STATISTICIAN

.408	Joey Votto's batting average after the All-Star break to go with his .490 OBP.
9	Stolen bases by Billy Hamilton over three consecutive games from Aug. 7-9, the most in franchise history over three games.
11	Number of starts by Dan Straily in which he went at least six innings and allowed three hits or fewer, a franchise record.
1	Saves (in two chances) by Opening Day closer J.J. Hoover.
26	Times a Reds reliever allowed a home run to the first batter he faced.
5–15	The Reds' record in interleague play. They are 133–182 in interleague play all time.
859	Number of innings thrown by Reds starters in '16, the fewest in the majors.



JOEY VOTTO

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3 PHI	4	5 PHI	6 PHI	7 STL	8 STL
9 STL	10 PIT	11 PIT	12 PIT	13 MIL	14 MIL	15 MIL
16 MIL	17	18 BAL	19 BAL	20 BAL	21 CHC	22 CHC
23 CHC	24 MIL	25 MIL	26 MIL	27	28 STL	29 STL
30 STL						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 PIT	2 PIT	3 PIT	4 PIT	5 SF	6 SF
7 SF	8 NYY	9 NYY	10	11 SF	12 SF	13 SF
14 SF	15	16 CHC	17 CHC	18 CHC	19 COL	20 COL
21 COL	22 CLE	23 CLE	24 CLE	25 CLE	26 PHI	27 PHI
28 PHI	29 TOR	30 TOR	31 TOR			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2 ATL	3 ATL
4 ATL	5 STL	6 STL	7 STL	8 STL	9 LAD	10 LAD
11 LAD	12 SD	13 SD	14 SD	15	16 LAD	17 LAD
18 LAD	19 TB	20 TB	21 TB	22	23 WAS	24 WAS
25 WAS	26	27 MIL	28 MIL	29 MIL	30 CHC	

July

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 CHC
2 CHC	3 COL	4 COL	5 COL	6 COL	7 ARI	8 ARI
9 ARI	10	11	12	13	14 WAS	15 WAS
16 WAS	17 WAS	18 ARI	19 ARI	20 ARI	21 MIA	22 MIA
23 MIA	24	25 NYY	26 NYY	27 MIA	28 MIA	29 MIA
30 MIA	31					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 PIT	2 PIT	3 PIT	4 STL	5 STL
6 STL	7 SD	8 SD	9 SD	10 SD	11 MIL	12 MIL
13 MIL	14 CHC	15 CHC	16 CHC	17 CHC	18 ATL	19 ATL
20 ATL	21	22 CHC	23 CHC	24 CHC	25 PIT	26 PIT
27 PIT	28	29 NYM	30 NYM	31 NYM		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 PIT	2 PIT
3 PIT	4 MIL	5 MIL	6 MIL	7 NYM	8 NYM	9 NYM
10 NYM	11	12 STL	13 STL	14 STL	15 PIT	16 PIT
17 PIT	18	19 STL	20 STL	21 STL	22 BOS	23 BOS
24 BOS	25	26 MIL	27 MIL	28 MIL	29 CHC	30 CHC
1 CHC						

Tucker Barnhart had a solid year filling in for Mesoraco. Defense was never a question with Barnhart, but his offensive numbers (.257, seven home runs and 51 RBIs in 377 at-bats) were reassuring. The Reds took Turner from Minnesota in the Rule 5 Draft to add to the catching depth.

BENCH The Reds haven't spent much to supplement the bench, choosing to pick up players off waivers. Peraza will technically be a bench player. The Reds could also use Dilson Herrera, obtained in the Bruce trade, in a bench role.

MANAGEMENT Williams takes over as president of baseball operations/GM, and Walt Jocketty moves into a consulting role. Williams hasn't had much of a chance to put his stamp on the club. The trades to shed salaries and add youth were all done before he took over. Price was given a one-year extension. The Reds probably have to win this year for him to get a fourth year. The pitching improved greatly after Mack Jenkins took over for Mark Riggins as pitching coach last season.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Reds would be happy to get back over .500. That's going to depend largely on the bullpen, which was so bad early last year that the team was out of it by May. The hope is Iglesias and Lorenzen, converted starters with top-shelf stuff, can fix the pen. The club goes to spring training with no defined closer, although Iglesias saved six games in eight tries down the stretch. The rotation has some depth if the young pitchers step up. The Reds have added quantity — trading for eight starters since the deadline in 2014. They need some quality to compete this year. The offense was eighth in the National League in runs last year, so with better pitching, the record should improve. Still, there are far too many ifs — if Bailey is healthy, if Mesoraco is healthy, if the Peraza and Hamilton continue to progress as hitters, if Schebler and Duvall continue to play well — to expect the Reds to contend.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

EXTRA CHALLENGE Adam Duvall is one of the few players in the majors to deal with diabetes. Duvall checks his blood sugar seven times a day. He made it through the 2016 season without missing any time with the disease. "You have good days and bad days," he says. "I've done a pretty good job as I've learned how to manage it. I think there are always going to be bad days because of different stuff you eat and how your body reacts."

NOT ABOUT ME Michael Lorenzen spent 10 days in Cincinnati in the middle of December doing community events, mostly with kids. "I'm doing as much as I can because I'm not here full-time right now," he says. "I've always known that this game was going to be used as a platform to glorify God. I want to take advantage of my time here. I did this last year too. It's just all about forgetting all the stuff that comes along with baseball selfishly. The self-glorification, taking my eyes off myself, focusing on the community and becoming a servant."

HIT THE GROUND RUNNING Billy Hamilton's offseason last year was spent rehabbing from shoulder surgery. That did not allow him to work on what he needs to do to be an effective big leaguer: Hit. "Going into offseason when you're full-go is a big difference," he says. "The main thing is to get my body right to stay healthy the whole year."

ON THE MEND After three surgeries — left shoulder and both hips over 14 months — catcher Devin Mesoraco has lived a ballplayer's nightmare. All rehab, almost no baseball. "It's been a long haul," Mesoraco says. "I've been focused on the end. Getting back to being the player I know I can be. They're not going to wait around forever. I've got to be out there playing. I realize this may be the last time I have an opportunity to be an everyday player and establish myself as one of better catchers in the game, the guy the organization invested in and knew they had." Mesoraco has been limited to 39 games over the last two seasons after his breakout, All-Star year in 2014.

JESSE LEGEND Top hitting prospect Jesse Winker got a surprise at Redsfest. He had a new number. "33," he said. "Larry Bird. I love it." Winker dealt with a left wrist injury last year. He was over it by December. One of the big questions for the Reds is where Winker will play. He had a full season in Triple-A last year, but the starting outfield is pretty set going into spring training. Would the Reds put him on the roster as a bench player?

AP Images

REDS ROSTER

General Manager: Dick Williams **Manager:** Bryan Price **Coaches:** Freddie Benavides (first base), Billy Hatcher (third base), Tony Jaramillo (asst. hitting), Mack Jenkins (pitching), Don Long (hitting), Ted Power (asst. pitching), Jim Riggleman (bench), Mike Stefanski (catching)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
46	Tim Adleman	R-R	6-5	225	11/13/87	**CINCINNATI**	**4-4**	**4.00**	**13**	**13**	**0**	**69.2**	**64**	**20**	**47**
						Louisville (AAA)	3-1	2.38	10	10	0	56.2	52	10	38
						AZL Reds (R)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	1.2	1	2	3
62	Barrett Astin	R-R	6-1	225	10/22/91	Pensacola (AA)	9-3	2.26	37	11	0	103.1	74	25	96
34	Homer Bailey	R-R	6-4	223	5/3/86	**CINCINNATI**	**2-3**	**6.65**	**6**	**6**	**0**	**23.0**	**35**	**7**	**27**
						Louisville (AAA)	1-2	5.63	7	7	0	24.0	31	9	19
						Pensacola (AA)	0-1	2.25	1	1	0	4.0	6	2	3
52	Tony Cingrani	L-L	6-4	214	7/5/89	**CINCINNATI**	**2-5**	**4.14**	**65**	**0**	**17**	**63.0**	**54**	**37**	**49**
54	Rookie Davis	R-R	6-5	255	4/29/93	Louisville (AAA)	0-2	7.50	5	4	0	24.0	38	7	15
						Pensacola (AA)	10-3	2.94	19	19	0	101.0	88	30	62
28	Anthony DeSclafani	R-R	6-1	195	4/18/90	**CINCINNATI**	**9-5**	**3.28**	**20**	**20**	**0**	**123.1**	**120**	**30**	**105**
						Louisville (AAA)	0-1	5.54	3	3	0	13.0	12	0	11
						Pensacola (AA)	0-0	6.75	1	1	0	4.0	4	1	5
						Dayton (A)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	5.0	3	1	3
70	Jumbo Diaz	R-R	6-4	278	2/27/84	**CINCINNATI**	**1-1**	**3.14**	**45**	**0**	**0**	**43.0**	**36**	**19**	**37**
						Louisville (AAA)	1-1	0.75	22	0	11	24.0	16	7	28
29	Brandon Finnegan	L-L	5-11	212	4/14/93	**CINCINNATI**	**10-11**	**3.98**	**31**	**31**	**0**	**172.0**	**150**	**84**	**145**
50	Amir Garrett	R-L	6-5	228	5/3/92	Louisville (AAA)	2-5	3.46	12	11	0	67.2	48	31	54
						Pensacola (AA)	5-3	1.75	13	12	0	77.0	51	28	78
69	Ariel Hernandez	R-R	6-4	225	3/2/92	Daytona (A)	3-1	1.76	25	0	3	30.2	18	19	34
						Dayton (A)	0-1	2.59	18	0	2	31.1	11	20	40
26	Raisel Iglesias	R-R	6-2	188	1/4/90	**CINCINNATI**	**3-2**	**2.53**	**37**	**5**	**6**	**78.1**	**63**	**26**	**83**
						Pensacola (AA)	0-0	0.00	3	2	0	5.0	3	1	5
	Tyrell Jenkins	R-R	6-4	225	7/20/92	**ATLANTA**	**2-4**	**5.88**	**14**	**8**	**0**	**52.0**	**55**	**33**	**26**
						Gwinnett (AAA)	9-3	2.47	17	12	0	83.2	86	35	55
21	Michael Lorenzen	R-R	6-3	217	1/4/92	**CINCINNATI**	**2-1**	**2.88**	**35**	**0**	**0**	**50.0**	**41**	**13**	**48**
						Louisville (AAA)	0-1	0.00	4	0	1	4.0	2	0	7
73	Keury Mella	R-R	6-2	200	8/2/93	Louisville (AAA)	1-0	1.29	1	1	0	7.0	3	1	6
						Daytona (A)	8-9	3.90	25	24	0	131.2	150	56	95
53	Wandy Peralta	L-L	6-0	220	7/27/91	**CINCINNATI**	**0-0**	**8.59**	**10**	**0**	**0**	**7.1**	**11**	**7**	**5**
						Louisville (AAA)	4-1	2.33	37	2	3	58.0	44	23	38
						Pensacola (AA)	0-1	3.06	13	0	0	17.2	17	3	20
25	Cody Reed	L-L	6-5	228	4/15/93	**CINCINNATI**	**0-7**	**7.36**	**10**	**10**	**0**	**47.2**	**67**	**19**	**43**
						Louisville (AAA)	6-4	3.08	13	13	0	73.0	71	20	65
47	Sal Romano	L-R	6-5	270	10/12/93	Pensacola (AA)	6-11	3.52	27	*27	0	*156.0	157	34	144
61	Jackson Stephens	R-R	6-2	220	5/11/94	Pensacola (AA)	8-11	3.33	27	26	0	151.1	148	41	131
55	Robert Stephenson	R-R	6-2	200	2/24/93	**CINCINNATI**	**2-3**	**6.08**	**8**	**8**	**0**	**37.0**	**41**	**19**	**31**
						Louisville (AAA)	8-9	4.41	24	24	0	136.2	115	71	120
58	Dan Straily	R-R	6-2	220	12/1/88	**CINCINNATI**	**14-8**	**3.76**	**34**	**31**	**0**	**191.1**	**154**	**73**	**162**
60	Nick Travieso	R-R	6-3	235	1/31/94	Pensacola (AA)	5-7	3.84	23	23	0	117.1	109	53	91
36	Blake Wood	R-R	6-5	233	8/8/85	**CINCINNATI**	**6-5**	**3.99**	**70**	**0**	**1**	**76.2**	**72**	**38**	**81**

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
16	Tucker Barnhart	S-R	5-11	192	1/7/91	**CINCINNATI**	**.257**	**115**	**377**	**34**	**97**	**7**	**51**	**36**	**72**	**1**
39	Devin Mesoraco	R-R	6-1	229	6/19/88	**CINCINNATI**	**.140**	**16**	**50**	**2**	**7**	**0**	**1**	**5**	**10**	**0**
74	Stuart Turner	R-R	6-2	220	12/27/91	Chattanooga (AA)	.239	97	322	40	77	6	41	35	72	5

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
2	Zack Cozart	R-R	6-0	204	8/12/85	**CINCINNATI**	**.252**	**121**	**464**	**67**	**117**	**16**	**50**	**37**	**84**	**4**
15	Dilson Herrera	R-R	5-10	210	3/3/94	Louisville (AAA)	.266	24	64	10	17	2	9	11	15	1
						Las Vegas (AAA)	.276	86	359	61	99	13	55	27	72	6
9	Jose Peraza	R-R	6-0	196	4/30/94	**CINCINNATI**	**.324**	**72**	**241**	**25**	**78**	**3**	**25**	**7**	**21**	**21**
						Louisville (AAA)	.281	71	288	40	81	2	21	21	43	10
4	Brandon Phillips	R-R	6-0	211	6/28/81	**CINCINNATI**	**.291**	**141**	**550**	**74**	**160**	**11**	**64**	**18**	**68**	**14**
	Richie Shaffer	R-R	6-3	230	3/15/91	**TAMPA BAY**	**.250**	**20**	**48**	**5**	**12**	**1**	**4**	**5**	**18**	**0**
						Durham (AAA)	.227	119	428	49	97	11	48	65	135	4
7	Eugenio Suarez	R-R	5-11	213	7/18/91	**CINCINNATI**	**.248**	**159**	**565**	**78**	**140**	**21**	**70**	**51**	**155**	**11**
19	Joey Votto	L-R	6-2	220	9/10/83	**CINCINNATI**	**.326**	**158**	**556**	**101**	**181**	**29**	**97**	**108**	**120**	**8**

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
30	Arismendy Alcantara	S-R	5-10	170	10/29/91	**OAKLAND**	**.211**	**16**	**19**	**2**	**4**	**0**	**2**	**0**	**8**	**3**
						Nashville (AAA)	.290	48	200	28	58	6	27	14	57	11
						Stockton (A)	.308	6	26	4	8	1	8	1	9	0
						Iowa (AAA)	.263	54	198	32	52	5	21	15	61	21
66	Aristides Aquino	R-R	6-4	220	4/22/94	Daytona (A)	.273	125	484	69	132	23	79	34	104	11
23	Adam Duvall	R-R	6-1	215	9/4/88	**CINCINNATI**	**.241**	**150**	**552**	**85**	**133**	**33**	**103**	**41**	**164**	**6**
71	Phillip Ervin	R-R	5-10	207	7/15/92	Pensacola (AA)	.239	123	419	71	100	13	45	65	88	36
6	Billy Hamilton	S-R	6-0	160	9/9/90	**CINCINNATI**	**.260**	**119**	**411**	**69**	**107**	**3**	**17**	**36**	**93**	**58**
43	Scott Schebler	L-R	6-0	228	10/6/90	**CINCINNATI**	**.265**	**82**	**257**	**36**	**68**	**9**	**40**	**19**	**59**	**2**
						Louisville (AAA)	.311	75	289	40	90	13	43	19	59	2
51	Steve Selsky	R-R	6-2	213	7/20/89	**CINCINNATI**	**.314**	**24**	**51**	**9**	**16**	**2**	**7**	**2**	**22**	**1**
						Louisville (AAA)	.280	85	296	40	83	9	37	29	74	2
						AZL Reds (R)	.556	3	9	2	5	0	4	2	3	0
33	Jesse Winker	L-L	6-3	215	8/17/93	Louisville (AAA)	.303	106	380	39	115	3	45	59	59	0
						AZL Reds (R)	.462	4	13	6	6	2	6	2	4	0

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

NICK SENZEL, 3B

The Reds could not have been happier with what Senzel, their No. 1 pick and the No. 2 pick overall, did in his first year as a professional. After a slow start in rookie Billings, Senzel was promoted to Low-A Dayton, where he hit .329/.415/.567 with seven home runs and 36 RBIs in 55 games. He also stole 15 bases. The Reds were lacking in high average/high on-base percentage hitters, so Senzel moves to the top of the prospect list. Senzel played strictly third base for Dayton, but he could move to second if the Reds decide to keep Eugenio Suarez at third. Senzel, who played collegiately at Tennessee, could fast track to the big leagues. He'll probably start 2017 at High-A Daytona with a chance to get bumped up to Double-A Pensacola.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Nick Senzel, 3B (21) The biggest question is how quickly he'll move up. Observers in Dayton were impressed with his speed and believe he'll develop home run power.

2. Amir Garrett, LHP (24) Garrett went 7–8 with a 2.55 ERA in stops at Triple-A Louisville and Double-A Pensacola. He has a high ceiling.

3. Robert Stephenson, RHP (24) Stephenson struggled with control to the point that his Triple-A manager called him out. This is a big year for him.

4. Cody Reed, LHP (23) He struggled in the majors so badly that the Reds had to pull the plug on him starting. Like Stephenson, he goes into 2017 with a lot to prove.

5. Jesse Winker, OF (23) Winker hit .303 at Triple-A Louisville. But he hit only three home runs in 380 at-bats. That's a bit of concern for a left fielder.

6. Taylor Trammell, OF (19) He hit .303/.374/.421 with 24 steals in 254 plate appearances. He can run and has power potential.

7. Aristides Aquino, OF (22) It took him four years to get out of rookie ball. But he has the tools, and he had a breakout year at Daytona, hitting .273 with 23 home runs and 79 RBIs.

8. Tyler Mahle, RHP (22) Went 8–3 with 2.50 ERA at Daytona and 6–3 with a 4.92 ERA at Pensacola. Has best control in the system.

9. Alfredo Rodriguez, SS (22) The Reds thought enough of the Cuban to sign him for $7 million. They're confident he'll be able to play shortstop in the big leagues.

10. Rookie Davis, RHP (23) Obtained in the Aroldis Chapman deal with the Yankees, Davis has a power arm. He went 10–3, 2.94 in Double-A. He struggled in Triple-A, but he has an outside shot to make the Reds either as a starter or a reliever.

MILWAUKEE BREWERS

Young, controllable talent. It's a phrase Milwaukee Brewers fans have heard plenty of times from general manager David Stearns, who kicked the team's massive rebuild into overdrive in 2016, and one they're going to hear plenty more of from the 32-year-old as they move into Year 2 of the project.

The 2016 Brewers weren't nearly as bad as they were projected to be, finishing 73–89 under second-year manager Craig Counsell despite trading away key veterans in All-Star catcher Jonathan Lucroy, reliever Will Smith and closer Jeremy Jeffress at the deadline. The haul for that trio combined with the talent the Brewers already had in the minor leagues wound up giving the organization the top farm system in all of baseball in the eyes of many talent evaluators, including an MLB-best eight top-100 prospects.

While the long-term goal is a sustained run of postseason appearances once the prospects come of age, the focus at the major-league level in the here and now is to identify the keepers moving forward while likely trading off the few established veterans — such as franchise cornerstone Ryan Braun — for even more of that young, controllable talent.

ROTATION Milwaukee's two top starters coming into 2017 weren't even on the Opening Day roster in 2016. Baby-faced Zach Davies led the Brewers with 11 wins in his first major-league season, and well-traveled Junior Guerra used his terrific split-finger fastball to post a 2.81 ERA. Competing to round out the rotation will be Jimmy Nelson, Matt Garza, Chase Anderson and Wily Peralta — all of whom had inconsistent 2016 seasons. Nelson went 3–13 with a 5.79 ERA over his final 21 starts in a year in which he was expected to develop into the Brewers' top starter, although he was at least reliable by turning in a team-best 32 starts, 179.1 innings and 140 strikeouts. He'll be expected to improve significantly in 2017. Garza, who muddled through another injury-riddled, subpar season, is the Brewers' second-highest-paid player with $12.5 million remaining on the final year of his contract. Anderson finished 2016 strong, going 5–1 with a 2.56 ERA over his final 12 starts, and wound up posting career highs with nine wins, 120 strikeouts and 30 starts. Peralta, Milwaukee's Opening Day starter, faltered badly early and was sent down to Triple-A Colorado Springs but was recalled in early August and went 3–4 with a 2.92 ERA in his final 10 starts. Taylor Jungmann, prospects Josh Hader, Jorge Lopez and Brent Suter and veteran Tommy Milone will get looks in the spring.

BULLPEN The Brewers have excelled at unearthing closers, and it appears as though they'll try to do so again after trading Jeffress away last year. There are internal candidates in hard throwers Corey Knebel and Jacob Barnes, but Knebel hasn't closed since his first year as a professional in 2013, and Barnes has just 27 major-league appearances under his belt. Stearns was also reportedly looking at several experienced closers available on the free-agent market, presumably for the short term and reasonable money. Jhan Mariñez, Michael Blazek, Tyler Cravy, Damien Magnifico and Rob Scahill are returnees competing for spots, and Suter and Milone could also be considered if they don't make the cut for the rotation.

MIDDLE INFIELD Jonathan Villar, acquired from the Houston Astros in November 2015 for a minor leaguer, was a revelation. Playing shortstop, third and second, the switch-hitter batted .285 with 19 homers while stealing an MLB-best 62 bases. He made his share of mistakes (29 errors, including 12 in 42 games at third) but was a catalyst atop the order. With super prospect Orlando Arcia entrenched at shortstop, Villar becomes the primary second baseman, leaving incumbent Scooter Gennett without a clear-cut role. Gennett had a career year at the plate in 2016, posting career highs in almost every major category, but his lack of versatility — he only plays second base — is a drawback.

CORNERS The Brewers remade themselves at both corner spots, first signing relative unknown Eric Thames to a three-year, $16 million free-agent contract and then acquiring Travis Shaw in a trade with Boston to play third. Thames, a former Toronto prospect, is coming off several monster years in the Korean League, while Shaw hit .242 with 16 home runs and 71 RBIs in 145 games with the Red Sox in 2016. Both are also left-handed hitters, a quality the Brewers have been sorely lacking in recent years.

OUTFIELD Braun re-established himself as a premier offensive threat in the National League while also moving back to left field. His surgically repaired back held up just fine, but various other nagging injuries limited him to 135 games and 511 at-bats. In center, Keon Broxton turned himself into the starter over the final few months thanks to some tweaks to his stance he made in the minor leagues around midseason. He hit .294 with 16 stolen bases in his final 46 games and enters camp as the incumbent. Domingo Santana is hoping a strong close to 2016 (.301, seven homers over his final 24 games)

2017 PREDICTION
5th
NL Central

2016 RECORD
73-89

HOME: 41-40 **ROAD:** 32-49

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

TEAM INFO

MILLER PARK
Opened: 2001 **Capacity:** 41,900
Left: 344' **Center:** 400' **Right:** 345'
Tickets: 414-902-4400
milwaukee.brewers.mlb.com

➤ FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
OF Ryan Braun

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
None

BULL MARKET
OF Domingo Santana

BEAR MARKET
2B Scooter Gennett

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
None

IPO OF Lewis Brinson

FUTURES MARKET OF Corey Ray

INSIDER TIP Based on previous performance, Jonathan Villar may be the most likely candidate for regression in the hobby. Conversely, Santana, Keon Broxton and Eric Thames are tempting sleepers.

➤ STATLINE

Games with a HR + SB: Last 10 Years

1. Ryan Braun	**29**
2t. Curtis Granderson	27
2t. Jose Reyes	27
4t. Melvin Upton Jr.	25
4t. Alex Rios	25

Braun: Tom DiPace; Santana: AP Images

RYAN BRAUN

➤ PROJECTED LINEUP

NEXT LEVEL

LINEUP

2B	Jonathan Villar (S)
CF	**Keon Broxton (R)**
LF	Ryan Braun (R)
3B	Travis Shaw (L)
RF	Domingo Santana (R)
1B	Eric Thames (L)
C	Andrew Susac (R)
SS	Orlando Arcia (R)

Keon Broxton's 94.9-mph average exit velocity was third best in the National League last season. He hit 43.3 percent of his balls in play for hard contact with just 13.3 percent for soft contact.

BENCH

UT	Hernan Perez (R)
2B	Scooter Gennett (L)
C	Jett Bandy (R)
OF	**Kirk Nieuwenhuis (L)**
OF	Lewis Brinson (R)

Kirk Nieuwenhuis hit an anemic .135/.256/.270 against lefthanders but hit a passable .218/.332/.399 against righthanders.

ROTATION

RHP	Zach Davies
RHP	Junior Guerra
RHP	**Jimmy Nelson**
RHP	Matt Garza
RHP	Chase Anderson

After posting a 3.62 ERA with a 77.0 percent strand rate in the first half, Jimmy Nelson had a 6.10 ERA with a 64.2 percent strand rate in the second half.

BULLPEN

RHP	Corey Knebel (Closer)
RHP	Jacob Barnes
RHP	**Michael Blazek**
RHP	Jhan Mariñez
LHP	Tommy Milone
RHP	Tyler Cravy
RHP	Rob Scahill

Michael Blazek's 13.4 percent walk rate was ninth-highest among relievers with at least 40 innings pitched.

➤ SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE BREWERS

"They're not trying to win this year, and I would expect them to be sellers again at the deadline. Orlando Arcia is going to be their shortstop, and he'll be part of their next good team. But there aren't a lot of those players on the big-league team now. Adding guys like Travis Shaw and Eric Thames was the right thing to do; it wouldn't surprise me if these guys are average or above-average big leaguers. Ryan Braun is still a very good offensive player, of course, and he's OK in left; I expect he'll be playing for a big-market team at some point. Jonathan Villar overperformed last year, and I think that's the best we'll see of him. Junior Guerra and Zach Davies have a chance to be in a rotation for a while, and if they perform well, they'll look to shop them. I expect them to make Corey Knebel the closer. He's got big stuff when he's healthy."

➤ STATISTICIAN

2	Triple plays recorded by the Brewers in 2016, the most in franchise history.
0	Complete games by Milwaukee starters in 2016. The Marlins, Yankees and Blue Jays also failed to record any.
3	Number of Brewers in franchise history to lead the major leagues in stolen bases. Jonathan Villar's 62 paced the bigs in 2016.
11	Consecutive seasons the Brewers have drawn at least 2.3 million fans at home. They're one of just nine teams to accomplish the feat over that span.
187	Increase in walks by the Brewers, from 412 in 2015 to 599 in 2016. It was the largest jump in the majors from one season to the next since the 1973 Expos (474 to 695).
3.13	Milwaukee's team ERA from Aug. 22 through the end of the 2016 season, which was tops in the majors (39 games).

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3 COL	4 COL	5 COL	6 COL	7 CHC	8 CHC
9 CHC	10	11 TOR	12 TOR	13 CIN	14 CIN	15 CIN
16 CIN	17 CHC	18 CHC	19 CHC	20 STL	21 STL	22 STL
23 STL	24 CIN	25 CIN	26 CIN	27	28 ATL	29 ATL
30 ATL						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 STL	2 STL	3 STL	4 STL	5 PIT	6 PIT
7 PIT	8	9 BOS	10 BOS	11 BOS	12 NYM	13 NYM
14 NYM	15 SD	16 SD	17 SD	18 SD	19 CHC	20 CHC
21 CHC	22	23 TOR	24 TOR	25 ARI	26 ARI	27 ARI
28 ARI	29 NYM	30 NYM	31 NYM			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 NYM	2 LAD	3 LAD
4 LAD	5 SF	6 SF	7 SF	8 SF	9 ARI	10 ARI
11 ARI	12	13 STL	14 STL	15 STL	16 SD	17 SD
18 SD	19 PIT	20 PIT	21 PIT	22 PIT	23 ATL	24 ATL
25 ATL	26	27 CIN	28 CIN	29 CIN	30 MIA	

July

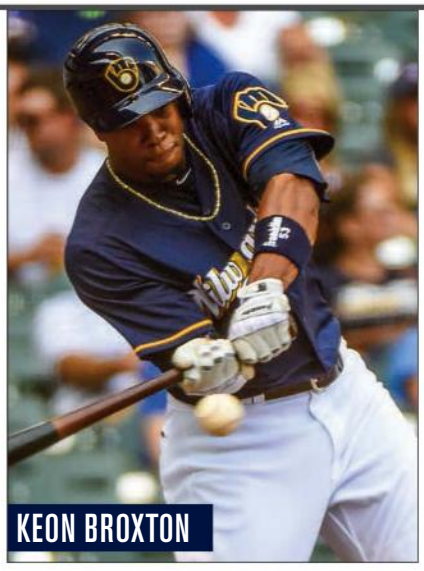
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 MIA
2 MIA	3 BAL	4 BAL	5 BAL	6	7 NYY	8 NYY
9 NYY	10	11	12	13	14 PHI	15 PHI
16 PHI	17 PIT	18 PIT	19 PIT	20 PIT	21 PHI	22 PHI
23 PHI	24	25 WAS	26 WAS	27 WAS	28 CHC	29 CHC
30 CHC	a					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 STL	2 STL	3 STL	4 TB	5 TB
6 TB	7 MIN	8 MIN	9 MIN	10 MIN	11 CIN	12 CIN
13 CIN	14	15 PIT	16 PIT	17	18 COL	19 COL
20 COL	21 SF	22 SF	23 SF	24	25 LAD	26 LAD
27 LAD	28	29 STL	30 STL	31 WAS		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 WAS	2 WAS
3 WAS	4 CIN	5 CIN	6 CIN	7	8 CHC	9 CHC
10 CHC	11 PIT	12 PIT	13 PIT		15 MIA	16 MIA
17 MIA	18 PIT	19 PIT	20 PIT	21 CHC	22 CHC	23 CHC
24 CHC	25	26 CIN	27 CIN	28 CIN	29 STL	30 STL
1 STL						



KEON BROXTON

helps keep him as the starter in right. He played in just 77 games overall after suffering right shoulder and elbow injuries.

CATCHING For the first time since 2009, the Brewers won't have either Lucroy or Martin Maldonado behind the plate, as both were traded. Taking their places are two former backups — Andrew Susac (Giants) and Jett Bandy (Angels). Both are younger, ascending players, with Susac known more for his offense and Bandy for his defense. Manny Piña, who showed well in 33 games last season, will also get a shot.

BENCH One of the great finds in 2016 was Hernan Perez, who morphed into one of the most versatile players in the game. He hit .272 with 13 homers and also stole 34 bases in 123 games split between right and center field and all four infield positions. Perez is likely to remain in his role of "super sub" moving forward. Kirk Nieuwenhuis hit just .209 overall, but his 13 homers and 44 RBIs (11 and 31 at Miller Park), solid defense in center and left-handed bat make him valuable. If the Brewers don't trade Gennett, he'll be a $2.5 million sub/pinch-hitter.

MANAGEMENT Stearns signed Counsell to a three-year contract extension that will take the hometown product through the 2020 season. His competitiveness and bent for player development make him a perfect fit for the rebuild. Stearns, in addition to remaking the organization on the field, continues to lead the Brewers' shift toward the use of advanced technology and analytics in the front office.

FINAL ANALYSIS With the Central Division-rival Cubs expected to run roughshod for the foreseeable future, the Brewers' plan to rebuild from the ground up comes at a good time. As a small-market team, their best chance for sustained success is stockpiling as many young high-ceiling players as possible, letting them develop and then rolling them out in the major leagues. It's an approach that takes remarkable patience, but one that can bear real fruit if done correctly.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

BRAUN REMAINS The Brewers and Dodgers very nearly pulled off a trade last Aug. 31 that would have sent Ryan Braun to Los Angeles. At 33 and with four years and $76 million left on his contract, Braun is the biggest remaining piece for Milwaukee to trade in its rebuilding efforts. It was expected the two teams would revisit their discussions in the offseason, but as of early January Braun remained a Brewer. Braun has six teams on his no-trade list, but he becomes a 10/5 player in May, which will give him full no-trade protection. Taking into account his past PED suspension and injury history, dealing him becomes an even tougher proposition.

LEFT OUT When rookie Brent Suter started at Seattle last Aug. 19, he became the first lefthander to do so for the Brewers in 474 games — the second-longest such streak in MLB history (the Dodgers went 681 games, from Sept. 25, 1992, to July 12, 1997). Suter, veteran Tommy Milone and prospect Josh Hader entered the New Year as the lone southpaws on Milwaukee's 40-man roster. The lack of lefties extended to the lineup, so the Brewers added Eric Thames and Travis Shaw to help provide balance.

UNPRECEDENTED MOVE First baseman Chris Carter proved to be a huge bargain for the Brewers in 2016. For a total of $3 million, Carter finished as the co-National League leader in home runs 41 along with Colorado's Nolan Arenado. The reward for his efforts? The Brewers non-tendered him, joining Houston as the second team in as many seasons to do so. While Carter was an exemplary teammate and his run production was solid, it was expected his salary would jump north of $10 million in arbitration. On a rebuilding team like the Brewers, it made little sense to pay that. So they switched gears by signing Thames and became the first team ever to jettison a home-run leader the following season.

KEEPING COSTS LOW Milwaukee opened the 2016 season with a payroll just shy of $64 million, the lowest it had been since 2006. Things won't change much heading into 2017, with the team expected to come in slightly lower than that figure. Braun ($19 million) and Matt Garza ($12.5 million) will combine to account for almost half that themselves, so if the Brewers can trade one or both, that figure will drop dramatically.

SPEED + POWER The Brewers became only the fourth team in MLB history to hit 180 home runs and steal 180 bases in a season. They joined the 1996 Rockies, 1998 Blue Jays and 2009 Rays in this exclusive club.

AP Images

BREWERS ROSTER

General Manager: David Stearns **Manager:** Craig Counsell **Coaches:** Darnell Coles (hitting), Joe Crawford (assistant), Derek Johnson (pitching), Jason Lane, Pat Murphy (bench), Ed Sedar (third base), Carlos Subero (first base), Lee Tunnell (bullpen)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
57	Chase Anderson	R-R	6-1	200	11/30/87	**MILWAUKEE**	**9-11**	**4.39**	**31**	**30**	**0**	**151.2**	**155**	**53**	**120**
50	Jacob Barnes	R-R	6-2	220	4/14/90	**MILWAUKEE**	**0-1**	**2.70**	**27**	**0**	**1**	**26.2**	**24**	**6**	**26**
						Colo. Sprs. (AAA)	2-1	1.21	17	0	1	22.1	14	7	23
						Biloxi (AA)	0-0	0.00	3	0	0	2.2	2	0	4
54	Michael Blazek	R-R	6-0	205	3/16/89	**MILWAUKEE**	**3-1**	**5.66**	**41**	**0**	**0**	**41.1**	**52**	**27**	**36**
						Colo. Sprs. (AAA)	0-0	4.32	5	1	0	8.1	10	3	8
45	Tyler Cravy	R-R	6-2	220	7/13/89	**MILWAUKEE**	**0-1**	**2.86**	**20**	**2**	**0**	**28.1**	**21**	**12**	**22**
						Colo. Sprs. (AAA)	3-3	5.91	21	9	0	56.1	56	28	65
27	Zach Davies	R-R	6-0	155	2/7/93	**MILWAUKEE**	**11-7**	**3.97**	**28**	**28**	**0**	**163.1**	**166**	**38**	**135**
22	Matt Garza	R-R	6-4	220	11/26/83	**MILWAUKEE**	**6-8**	**4.51**	**19**	**19**	**0**	**101.2**	**117**	**36**	**70**
						Wisconsin (A)	0-2	4.76	3	3	0	11.1	13	1	10
41	Junior Guerra	R-R	6-0	205	1/16/85	**MILWAUKEE**	**9-3**	**2.81**	**20**	**20**	**0**	**121.2**	**94**	**43**	**100**
						Colo. Sprs. (AAA)	0-2	4.05	5	5	0	26.2	18	11	25
	Josh Hader	L-L	6-3	185	4/7/94	Colo. Sprs. (AAA)	1-7	5.22	14	14	0	69.0	63	36	88
						Biloxi (AA)	2-1	0.95	11	11	0	57.0	38	19	73
47	Adrian Houser	R-R	6-4	235	2/2/93	Biloxi (AA)	3-7	5.25	13	13	0	70.1	76	22	56
26	Taylor Jungmann	R-R	6-6	210	12/18/89	**MILWAUKEE**	**0-5**	**7.76**	**8**	**6**	**0**	**26.2**	**30**	**17**	**18**
						Colo. Sprs. (AAA)	1-3	9.87	8	8	0	31.0	39	35	24
						Biloxi (AA)	3-4	2.51	13	13	0	75.1	53	35	81
46	Corey Knebel	R-R	6-4	220	11/26/91	**MILWAUKEE**	**1-4**	**4.68**	**35**	**0**	**2**	**32.2**	**32**	**16**	**38**
						Colo. Sprs. (AAA)	1-0	1.32	11	2	2	13.2	5	3	14
28	Jorge Lopez	R-R	6-3	195	2/10/93	Colo. Sprs. (AAA)	1-7	6.81	17	16	0	79.1	101	55	66
						Biloxi (AA)	2-4	3.97	8	8	0	45.1	45	16	47
51	Damien Magnifico	R-R	6-1	195	5/24/91	**MILWAUKEE**	**0-0**	**6.00**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**3.0**	**2**	**3**	**0**
						Colo. Sprs. (AAA)	6-7	4.06	52	0	18	62.0	57	33	61
53	Jhan Mariñez	R-R	6-1	200	8/12/88	**MILWAUKEE**	**0-1**	**3.22**	**43**	**0**	**0**	**58.2**	**60**	**21**	**47**
						TAMPA BAY	**0-0**	**2.45**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**3.2**	**2**	**0**	**3**
						Durham (AAA)	2-1	2.25	6	0	1	8.0	10	3	9
	Tommy Milone	L-L	6-0	220	2/16/87	**MINNESOTA**	**3-5**	**5.71**	**19**	**12**	**0**	**69.1**	**84**	**22**	**49**
						Rochester (AAA)	4-0	1.66	7	7	0	48.2	41	4	41
52	Jimmy Nelson	R-R	6-6	250	6/5/89	**MILWAUKEE**	**8-16**	**4.62**	**32**	**32**	**0**	**179.1**	**186**	**86**	**140**
38	Wily Peralta	R-R	6-1	255	5/8/89	**MILWAUKEE**	**7-11**	**4.86**	**23**	**23**	**0**	**127.2**	**152**	**43**	**93**
						Colo. Sprs. (AAA)	1-3	6.31	10	10	0	41.1	55	17	39
58	Rob Scahill	L-R	6-2	220	2/15/87	**MILWAUKEE**	**0-0**	**2.45**	**16**	**0**	**0**	**18.1**	**16**	**3**	**14**
						Colo. Sprs. (AAA)	0-0	4.82	8	0	0	9.1	11	5	4
						PITTSBURGH	**0-0**	**4.41**	**15**	**0**	**0**	**16.1**	**18**	**6**	**13**
						Indianapolis (AAA)	0-2	4.00	13	0	3	18.0	23	8	18
35	Brent Suter	L-L	6-5	195	8/29/89	**MILWAUKEE**	**2-2**	**3.32**	**14**	**2**	**0**	**21.2**	**25**	**5**	**15**
						Colo. Sprs. (AAA)	6-6	3.50	26	15	2	110.2	129	14	75
59	Carlos Torres	R-R	6-1	180	10/22/82	**MILWAUKEE**	**3-3**	**2.73**	**72**	**0**	**2**	**82.1**	**65**	**30**	**78**
	Ryan Webb	R-R	6-6	245	2/5/86	**TAMPA BAY**	**0-0**	**5.19**	**18**	**0**	**0**	**17.1**	**27**	**3**	**11**
	Taylor Williams	S-R	5-11	195	7/21/91	Injured — Missed Season									

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	Jett Bandy	R-R	6-4	235	3/26/90	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**.234**	**70**	**209**	**23**	**49**	**8**	**25**	**11**	**38**	**1**
						Salt Lake (AAA)	.274	24	95	13	26	2	21	2	19	2
9	Manny Piña	R-R	6-0	215	6/5/87	**MILWAUKEE**	**.254**	**33**	**71**	**4**	**18**	**2**	**12**	**10**	**15**	**0**
						Colo. Sprs. (AAA)	.329	63	237	35	78	5	43	17	39	1
13	Andrew Susac	R-R	6-1	215	3/22/90	**MILWAUKEE**	**.235**	**9**	**17**	**3**	**4**	**1**	**2**	**2**	**5**	**0**
						Colo. Sprs. (AAA)	.125	11	40	2	5	0	3	2	16	0
						Sacramento (AAA)	.273	58	209	28	57	8	36	24	45	0
						San Jose (A)	.364	3	11	2	4	0	2	1	1	0

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
3	Orlando Arcia	R-R	6-0	165	8/4/94	**MILWAUKEE**	**.219**	**55**	**201**	**21**	**44**	**4**	**17**	**15**	**47**	**8**
						Colo. Sprs. (AAA)	.267	100	404	59	108	8	53	29	77	15
2	Scooter Gennett	L-R	5-10	185	5/1/90	**MILWAUKEE**	**.263**	**136**	**498**	**58**	**131**	**14**	**56**	**38**	**114**	**8**
14	Hernan Perez	R-R	6-1	215	3/26/91	**MILWAUKEE**	**.272**	**123**	**404**	**50**	**110**	**13**	**56**	**18**	**94**	**34**
						Colo. Sprs. (AAA)	.339	16	62	10	21	1	11	3	10	2
29	Yadiel Rivera	R-R	6-3	185	5/2/92	**MILWAUKEE**	**.212**	**35**	**66**	**12**	**14**	**0**	**3**	**2**	**20**	**0**
						Colo. Sprs. (AAA)	.227	83	304	38	69	2	41	10	78	4
	Travis Shaw	L-R	6-4	230	4/16/90	**BOSTON**	**.242**	**145**	**480**	**63**	**116**	**16**	**71**	**43**	**133**	**5**
7	Eric Thames	L-R	6-0	210	11/10/86	NC Dinos (Korea)	.317	121	432	117	137	40	118	74	103	13
5	Jonathan Villar	S-R	6-1	215	5/2/91	**MILWAUKEE**	**.285**	**156**	**589**	**92**	**168**	**19**	**63**	**79**	**174**	**62**

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
8	Ryan Braun	R-R	6-2	205	11/17/83	**MILWAUKEE**	**.305**	**135**	**511**	**80**	**156**	**30**	**91**	**46**	**98**	**16**
	Lewis Brinson	R-R	6-3	195	5/8/94	Colo. Sprs. (AAA)	.382	23	89	14	34	4	20	2	21	4
						Frisco (AA)	.237	77	304	46	72	11	40	17	64	11
						AZL Rangers (R)	.231	4	13	3	3	0	1	2	2	2
23	Keon Broxton	R-R	6-3	195	5/7/90	**MILWAUKEE**	**.242**	**75**	**207**	**28**	**50**	**9**	**19**	**36**	**88**	**23**
						Colo. Sprs. (AAA)	.287	47	178	30	51	8	26	20	60	18
	Ryan Cordell	R-R	6-4	195	3/31/92	Frisco (AA)	.264	107	405	69	107	19	70	32	97	12
10	Kirk Nieuwenhuis	L-R	6-3	225	8/7/87	**MILWAUKEE**	**.209**	**125**	**335**	**38**	**70**	**13**	**44**	**56**	**133**	**8**
	Brett Phillips	L-R	6-0	185	5/30/94	Biloxi (AA)	.229	124	441	60	101	16	62	67	154	12
25	Michael Reed	R-R	6-0	215	11/18/92	**MILWAUKEE**	**.182**	**8**	**22**	**3**	**4**	**0**	**0**	**2**	**7**	**1**
						Colo. Sprs. (AAA)	.248	121	411	68	102	8	45	74	124	20
16	Domingo Santana	R-R	6-5	220	8/5/92	**MILWAUKEE**	**.256**	**77**	**246**	**34**	**63**	**11**	**32**	**32**	**91**	**2**
						Colo. Sprs. (AAA)	.556	3	9	5	5	0	5	5	3	0
						Biloxi (AA)	.333	3	6	2	2	1	1	4	1	1
						Wisconsin (A)	.174	8	23	4	4	1	3	4	5	0

➤ FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

COREY RAY, OF

The fact that they already had an abundance of talented outfielders in the minor leagues didn't dissuade the Brewers from making Ray the fifth overall pick out of the University of Louisville in June. Mentored by and compared to fellow Chicago product Curtis Granderson, Ray signed for $4.125 million and went on to hit .239 with five home runs and 17 RBIs in 60-plus total games split between two levels of Single-A. He underwent surgery on his left knee after tearing cartilage on a slide in an instructional league game in early October but was expected to be ready for spring training. Best-case scenario: Ray could be in the majors by 2019.

➤ TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Josh Hader, LHP (22) Struggled at AAA Colorado Springs — like most pitchers do — after a midseason promotion but is highly regarded and should crack the Brewers' starting rotation at some point this year.

2. Lewis Brinson, OF (22) Hit .382 with four homers, 20 RBIs, a .387 on-base percentage and OPS of 1.005 in 23 games at AAA Colorado Springs after being acquired from the Rangers as part of the trade package for Jonathan Lucroy.

3. Isan Diaz, 2B (20) Brewers Minor League Player of the Year hit .264 with 20 homers and 75 RBIs at Low-A Wisconsin. Has some defensive limitations, but his powerful left-handed bat has Brewers brass excited.

4. Corey Ray, OF (22) Ray is a natural center fielder but could ultimately move to a corner spot considering the Brewers' organizational depth at the position.

5. Brandon Woodruff, RHP (24) Had a breakthrough 2016, earning the organization's Minor League Pitcher of the Year award after striking out 173 in 158 innings.

6. Luis Ortiz, RHP (21) Acquired along with Brinson in the Lucroy trade, Ortiz was eased in at Class AA Biloxi over six starts before reaching his innings limit.

7. Phil Bickford, RHP (21) Bickford has a big arm and big talent but must serve a 50-game suspension next season for his second positive test for a drug of abuse.

8. Trent Clark, OF (20) Multiple leg injuries caused the former first-round pick to spin his wheels over 59 games at Low-A Wisconsin.

9. Lucas Erceg, 3B (21) The Brewers' second-round pick in June, Erceg hit a combined .327 with nine homers and 51 RBIs at two minor-league stops.

10. Marcos Diplan, RHP (20) Went 7–4 with a 3.02 ERA in 27 games (17 starts, career-high 113.1 innings) between Low-A Wisconsin and High-A Brevard County.

PITTSBURGH PIRATES

A magical three-season run of postseason appearances ended with a thud last year. The Pirates went 78–83, finishing 25 games behind the eventual World Series champion Chicago Cubs in the National League Central. In 2015, the Pirates won 98 games, one more than the Cubs.

ROTATION Righthander Gerrit Cole is the ace of a young rotation, and questions surround the 26-year-old after he went 7–10 with a 3.88 ERA in 21 starts last year while bothered by elbow problems. He is one of the most talented young pitchers in the game, as evidenced by his 19-win season in 2015, and the Pirates desperately need him to return to form. Righthander Ivan Nova was re-signed to a three-year, $26-million contract. He had a fine 11-start run after being acquired from the Yankees in a trade on Aug. 1. Righthanders Jameson Taillon, Chad Kuhl and Tyler Glasnow and lefthander Steven Brault figure to round out the rotation. They are talented but young and inexperienced (none will be older than 25 on Opening Day), and they have pitched a combined 233.1 innings in the major leagues. Taillon impressed as a rookie last year, going 5–4 with a 3.38 ERA in 18 starts after missing the previous two seasons while recovering from Tommy John surgery and a sports hernia operation.

BULLPEN Lefthander Tony Watson, an All-Star setup man, moved into the closer's role last season when Mark Melancon was traded to the Nationals in late July. He converted 15-of-18 save opportunities in the final two months. Righthander Daniel Hudson was signed to a two-year, $11.5-million contact in free agency to replace Neftali Feliz as the primary setup man after spending the last seven seasons with the Diamondbacks. Hudson induces groundballs at a high rate, which fits the Pirates' organizational pitching philosophy. Hard-throwing Felipe Rivero will be the top lefthander, and the Pirates have high hopes that the 25-year-old can learn to consistently throw strikes and become a lockdown reliever. Righthanders Juan Nicasio and Jared Hughes and lefthanders Antonio Bastardo and Wade LeBlanc can pitch multiple innings. That will come in handy with such a young rotation.

MIDDLE INFIELD Second baseman Josh Harrison received a four-year, $27.3 million contract after hitting .315 with 13 home runs in 2014. While he has batted a combined .285 in the two seasons since, he also has just eight homers. Jordy Mercer is a steady if unspectacular shortstop. He is a decent hitter with some power and makes all the routine plays in the field along with the occasional highlight-reel one.

CORNERS Switch-hitting rookie Josh Bell will take over at first base after hitting .273 with three homers in 45 games last season. While he has struggled to make the conversion from right field, he has an advanced approach to the plate and the chance to add more power to his game. Third baseman Jung Ho Kang's status is cloudy as he could be facing a suspension after being arrested for drunk driving in his native South Korea during the offseason and being accused of sexually assaulting a woman in a Chicago hotel room last June. He has hit .273 with 36 home runs in his first two major-league seasons after starring in the Korea Baseball Organization.

OUTFIELD The Pirates have one of the best trios in the game, but the question is what is to become of center fielder Andrew McCutchen. The 2013 National League MVP is coming off a season in which he hit a career-low .256 with 24 home runs while playing awful defense. McCutchen will make $14 million this season, which would be the highest salary in franchise history, in the final guaranteed year of his six-year, $51.5 million contract that includes a $14.5 million club option for 2018 that can be bought out for $1 million. History shows that the Pirates almost always trade their star players before they reach free agency, so it seems likely he will be dealt by the July 31 non-waiver deadline. Starling Marte has won Gold Gloves in left field in each of the last two seasons and could begin this season in center field with McCutchen shifting to one of the corner spots. Marte is also a dynamic offensive player with power and speed who stole 47 bases last season but hit a disappointing nine homers. Right fielder Gregory Polanco is a five-tool talent who has the chance to be a star. The 25-year-old hit a career-high 22 home runs last year in his third season and is still tapping into his potential. Austin Meadows will be waiting for an opportunity at Triple-A Indianapolis. The 21-year-old, who was the first of the Pirates' two first-round draft picks in 2013, would likely be ready to slide into the lineup in place of McCutchen by July.

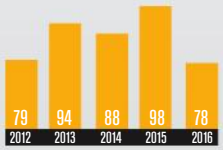
CATCHING Francisco Cervelli has proven to be a quality starter behind the plate during his two seasons with the Pirates after spending seven years as a backup with the Yankees. While he has an outstanding

2017 PREDICTION
3rd
NL Central

2016 RECORD
78-83

HOME: 38-42 **ROAD:** 40-41

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND



TEAM INFO

PNC PARK
Opened: 2001 **Capacity:** 38,362
Left: 325' **Center:** 399' **Right:** 320'
Tickets: 1-800-BUY-BUCS
pittsburgh.pirates.mlb.com

➤ FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
OF Gregory Polanco

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
RHP Gerrit Cole

BULL MARKET
1B Josh Bell

BEAR MARKET
3B/1B David Freese

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
RHP Gerrit Cole

IPO RHP Tyler Glasnow

FUTURES MARKET OF Austin Meadows

INSIDER TIP Of the game's incumbent closers, Tony Watson's job is as tenuous as any. Should he falter, the Pirates won't hesitate to kick bullet-throwing Felipe Rivero's tires.

➤ STATLINE

WIN% Vs. LHPs: 2016

1. Pirates	**.683**
2. Marlins	.647
3. Cubs	.622
4. Brewers	.612
5. Indians	.608

Tom DiPace

➤ PROJECTED LINEUP

NEXT LEVEL

LINEUP

2B	Josh Harrison (R)
1B	Josh Bell (S)
CF	Andrew McCutchen (R)
LF	Starling Marte (R)
RF	**Gregory Polanco (L)**
3B	Jung Ho Kang (R)
C	Francisco Cervelli (R)
SS	Jordy Mercer (R)

BENCH

C	Chris Stewart (R)
1B/OF	John Jaso (L)
INF	**David Freese (R)**
UT	Adam Frazier (L)
UT	Alen Hanson (S)

ROTATION

RHP	**Gerrit Cole**
RHP	Ivan Nova
RHP	Jameson Taillon
RHP	Chad Kuhl
LHP	Steven Brault

BULLPEN

LHP	Tony Watson (Closer)
RHP	Daniel Hudson
LHP	Felipe Rivero
RHP	Juan Nicasio
LHP	Antonio Bastardo
RHP	**Jared Hughes**
LHP	Wade LeBlanc

Gregory Polanco has had a large uptick in hard contact each season. After improving 6.0 points after his rookie season to 30.3 percent in 2015, he improved to 35.7 percent hard contact in 2016.

David Freese crushed left-handed pitching to the tune of a .337/.419/.543 line compared to .252/.333/.377 vs. righties.

Gerrit Cole has had a higher than league average BABIP in every year of his career, but his .345 BABIP last season was 34 points higher than his previous career high, contributing to his career-high 3.88 ERA.

Jared Hughes was one of three qualified relievers who got opponents to swing at more than 40 percent of pitches outside the strike zone (40.5 percent).

➤ SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE PIRATES

"I think they're primed for a bounce-back season. Their pitching fell apart last year, but they could have a really nasty top three if Gerrit Cole is healthy and Jameson Taillon and Tyler Glasnow click behind him. Glasnow's command isn't there yet, and he may never have it, but like Taillon, he has really good stuff. I wouldn't be surprised at all if Felipe Rivero is their closer. He has command issues, but that changeup is a real weapon with the fastball at 96 and his slider. Andrew McCutchen was completely lost last year; I don't know if it was the hand injury or what, but he couldn't catch up to velocity, and they played him too shallow in center, which backfired. But there's still a superstar in there, and with Starling Marte and Gregory Polanco, they really could have three All-Star outfielders."

➤ STATISTICIAN

20	Fewer wins for the Pirates in 2016 (78) than 2015 (98). The only bigger drop from one season to the next in franchise history was 21 from 1992 (96) to 1993 (75).
4.21	Pirates ERA in 2016, which ranked 18th in the major leagues. They were second in 2015 with a 3.23 mark.
-28	Center fielder Andrew McCutchen's Defensive Runs Saved in 2016, the worst mark in the major leagues at any position.
55	Players used by the Pirates in 2016, a franchise record.
32	Pitchers used by the Pirates in 2016, a franchise record.
4	Pitchers who made their major-league debuts in starting roles in 2016 — righthanders Tyler Glasnow, Chad Kuhl and Jameson Taillon and lefthander Steven Brault — the most for the Pirates in one season since 1903.
585	Innings pitched by Pirates relievers last season, second to the Los Angeles Dodgers' 590.2 and a franchise record.

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3 BOS	4	5 BOS	6 BOS	7 ATL	8 ATL
9 ATL	10 CIN	11 CIN	12 CIN	13	14 CHC	15 CHC
16 CHC	17 STL	18 STL	19 STL	20	21 NYY	22 NYY
23 NYY	24 CHC	25 CHC	26 CHC	27	28 MIA	29 MIA
30 MIA						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 CIN	2 CIN	3 CIN	4 CIN	5 MIL	6 MIL
7 MIL	8 LAD	9 LAD	10 LAD	11 ARI	12 ARI	13 ARI
14 ARI		16 WAS	17 WAS	18 WAS	19 PHI	20 PHI
21 PHI	22 ATL	23 ATL	24 ATL	25 ATL	26 NYM	27 NYM
28 NYM	29 ARI	30 ARI	31 ARI			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2 NYM	3 NYM
4 NYM	5	6 BAL	7 BAL	8 MIA	9 MIA	10 MIA
11 MIA	12 COL	13 COL	14 COL	15	16 CHC	17 CHC
18 CHC	19 MIL	20 MIL	21 MIL	22 MIL	23 STL	24 STL
25 STL		27 TB	28 TB	29 TB	30 SF	

July

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 SF
2 SF	3 PHI	4 PHI	5 PHI	6 PHI	7 CHC	8 CHC
9 CHC	10	11	12	13	14 STL	15 STL
16 STL	17 MIL	18 MIL	19 MIL	20 MIL	21 COL	22 COL
23 COL	24 SF	25 SF	26 SF	27	28 SD	29 SD
30 SD	31					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 CIN	2 CIN	3 CIN	4 SD	5 SD
6 SD	7 DET	8 DET	9 DET	10 DET	11 TOR	12 TOR
13 TOR	14	15 MIL	16 MIL	17 STL	18 STL	19 STL
20 STL	21 LAD	22 LAD	23 LAD	24 LAD	25 CIN	26 CIN
27 CIN	28 CHC	29 CHC	30 CHC	31		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 CIN	2 CIN
3 CIN	4 CHC	5 CHC	6 CHC	7 CHC	8 STL	9 STL
10 STL	11 MIL	12 MIL	13 MIL	14	15 CIN	16 CIN
17 CIN	18 MIL	19 MIL	20 MIL	21	22 STL	23 STL
24 STL	25	26 BAL	27 BAL	28 WAS	29 WAS	30 WAS
1 WAS						

JOSH HARRISON

.373 on-base percentage since coming to Pittsburgh, the Pirates place an even greater value on his rapport with the pitching staff and pitch-framing ability.

BENCH Chris Stewart is a solid backup catcher, pretty much a Cervelli Lite with his strong defense and leadership ability. John Jaso began last season as the starting first baseman after being signed to a two-year, $8 million contract in free agency. The Pirates are counting on him to be a solid backup at both corner infield and outfield spots this season while providing left-handed production on a roster filled with right-handed hitters. Veteran third baseman David Freese was signed midway through spring training last year to serve as protection while Kang recovered from knee surgery. Freese played so well in a part-time role that the Pirates gave him a two-year, $11 million contract extension during the season. He could be a pivotal figure if Kang's legal troubles threaten his availability this season. A couple of homegrown products, Adam Frazier and Alen Hanson, will serve as super utility players as they can play all over the infield and outfield. Hanson's outstanding speed could make him a factor as a pinch-runner.

MANAGEMENT General manager Neal Huntington and manager Clint Hurdle have done an outstanding job of turning around a moribund franchise. However, both have begun showing subtle signs of frustration about working under the payroll constraints of owner Bob Nutting, perhaps a sign that they could show wanderlust when their contracts expire at the end of this season.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Pirates seemingly have little chance of overtaking the Cubs in the NL Central this season, though they plan to give it a shot. However, if they fall too far behind in the standings, they are likely to shift into rebuilding mode and sort out which young players — especially starting pitchers — fit into their long-term plans and try to add more prospects by trading McCutchen.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

TRADE TALKS? Center fielder Andrew McCutchen heard his name mentioned in trade rumors for the first time in his career during the Winter Meetings in December when he was nearly traded to the Nationals. The 2013 National League MVP admits that the chatter was a little jarring. "I'd be lying if I told you it didn't bother me that my name was out there," McCutchen says. "Of course it did. I'm human." McCutchen has spent his entire career with the Pirates organization since they selected him in the first round of the 2005 amateur draft.

WEDDING BELLS In one of the biggest baseball social events of the offseason, Pirates righthander Gerrit Cole married Amy Crawford, sister of San Francisco Giants shortstop Brandon Crawford. The Coles had been dating since their college days at UCLA. Gerrit starred on the baseball team and Amy played softball for the Lady Bruins. Cole said that Scott Boras gifted well but did not reveal what his agent bought the couple.

OFF THE BOAT John Jaso loves spending time during the offseason fishing for grouper on his 23-foot boat in St. Petersburg, Fla. Grouper season finished at the end of December. That gave Jaso six weeks to begin working out at third base and in the outfield in advance of the opening of spring training. Jaso was the Pirates' primary first baseman last season. However, rookie Josh Bell is expected to play first this year, and the Pirates want Jaso to be able to fill in at both infield and outfield corners.

POSITIVE INFLUENCE Infielder David Freese says he is more than willing to talk with third baseman Jung Ho Kang, who was arrested for driving under the influence in his native South Korea during the offseason. It was Kang's second DUI, and Freese was also arrested twice on DUI charges in the past. "I'm here for him if he ever needs me," Freese says. "I have a couple DUIs. It's a serious thing. Jung Ho is a good guy who has made mistakes."

GET MOVING Class AA Altoona manager Joey Cora was promoted to the major-league staff as the third base coach in October with the hope that he could improve the team's baserunning. Cora was a major-league infielder for 11 seasons and the bench coach for manager Ozzie Guillen on the 2005 World Series champion Chicago White Sox. "We don't have Billy Hamilton, but we have a bunch of guys that can run," Cora says. "We want to emphasize that we can score from first, score from second on a base hit."

Tom DiPace

PIRATES ROSTER

General Manager: Neal Huntington **Manager:** Clint Hurdle **Coaches:** Kimera Bartee (first base), Jeff Branson (hitting), Joey Cora (third base), Dave Jauss, Jeff Livesey (asst. hitting), Tom Prince (bench), Euclides Rojas (bullpen), Ray Searage (pitching)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
59	Antonio Bastardo	R-L	5-11	205	9/21/85	**PITTSBURGH**	**3-0**	**4.13**	**28**	**0**	**0**	**24.0**	**19**	**11**	**28**
						NEW YORK NL	**0-0**	**4.74**	**41**	**0**	**0**	**43.2**	**41**	**21**	**46**
53	Lisalverto Bonilla	S-R	6-0	200	6/18/90	Oklahoma City (AAA)	4-5	4.28	24	6	2	73.2	76	27	79
						Tulsa (AA)	1-2	3.38	7	7	0	37.1	33	13	39
43	Steven Brault	L-L	6-0	200	4/29/92	**PITTSBURGH**	**0-3**	**4.86**	**8**	**7**	**0**	**33.1**	**45**	**17**	**29**
						Indianapolis (AAA)	2-7	3.91	16	15	0	71.1	66	35	81
						West Virginia (A)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	4.0	1	0	5
45	Gerrit Cole	R-R	6-4	220	9/8/90	**PITTSBURGH**	**7-10**	**3.88**	**21**	**21**	**0**	**116.0**	**131**	**36**	**98**
						Indianapolis (AAA)	0-0	0.00	2	2	0	8.0	4	0	12
24	Tyler Glasnow	L-R	6-8	220	8/23/93	**PITTSBURGH**	**0-2**	**4.24**	**7**	**4**	**0**	**23.1**	**22**	**13**	**24**
						Indianapolis (AAA)	8-3	1.87	20	20	0	110.2	69	68	144
						Altoona (AA)	0-0	3.00	2	2	0	6.0	4	6	11
68	Clay Holmes	R-R	6-5	230	3/27/93	Altoona (AA)	10-9	4.22	26	26	0	136.1	138	64	101
41	Daniel Hudson	R-R	6-3	230	3/9/87	**ARIZONA**	**3-2**	**5.22**	**70**	**0**	**5**	**60.1**	**65**	**22**	**58**
48	Jared Hughes	R-R	6-7	240	7/4/85	**PITTSBURGH**	**1-1**	**3.03**	**67**	**0**	**1**	**59.1**	**62**	**22**	**34**
						Indianapolis (AAA)	0-0	7.50	4	0	0	6.0	7	3	5
34	Drew Hutchison	L-R	6-3	205	8/22/90	**PITTSBURGH**	**0-0**	**5.56**	**6**	**1**	**0**	**11.1**	**15**	**3**	**10**
						Indianapolis (AAA)	1-1	4.50	7	6	0	36.0	37	15	28
						TORONTO	**1-0**	**4.97**	**3**	**2**	**0**	**12.2**	**13**	**4**	**4**
						Buffalo (AAA)	6-5	3.26	18	18	0	102.0	78	35	110
49	Nick Kingham	R-R	6-5	225	11/8/91	Altoona (AA)	1-1	5.73	2	2	0	11.0	6	4	10
						Bradenton (A)	2-0	0.00	2	2	0	11.0	8	1	10
						GCL Pirates (R)	0-4	3.00	6	6	0	24.0	23	1	16
39	Chad Kuhl	R-R	6-3	220	9/10/92	**PITTSBURGH**	**5-4**	**4.20**	**14**	**14**	**0**	**70.2**	**73**	**20**	**53**
						Indianapolis (AAA)	6-3	2.37	16	16	0	83.2	81	16	66
38	Wade LeBlanc	L-L	6-3	210	8/7/84	**PITTSBURGH**	**1-0**	**0.75**	**8**	**0**	**1**	**12.0**	**7**	**2**	**10**
						SEATTLE	**3-0**	**4.50**	**11**	**8**	**1**	**50.0**	**52**	**9**	**41**
						Buffalo (AAA)	7-2	1.71	14	14	0	89.2	84	21	85
66	Dovydas Neverauskas	R-R	6-3	215	1/14/93	Indianapolis (AAA)	3-4	3.60	25	0	4	30.0	36	11	24
						Altoona (AA)	1-0	2.57	22	0	1	28.0	12	11	32
12	Juan Nicasio	R-R	6-4	255	8/31/86	**PITTSBURGH**	**10-7**	**4.50**	**52**	**12**	**0**	**118.0**	**117**	**45**	**138**
46	Ivan Nova	R-R	6-5	240	1/12/87	**PITTSBURGH**	**5-2**	**3.06**	**11**	**11**	**0**	**64.2**	**68**	**3**	**52**
						NEW YORK AL	**7-6**	**4.90**	**21**	**15**	**1**	**97.1**	**107**	**25**	**75**
73	Felipe Rivero	L-L	6-2	210	7/5/91	**PITTSBURGH**	**1-3**	**3.29**	**28**	**0**	**0**	**27.1**	**23**	**3**	**18**
						WASHINGTON	**0-3**	**4.53**	**47**	**0**	**1**	**49.2**	**43**	**15**	**53**
31	A.J. Schugel	R-R	6-0	200	6/27/89	**PITTSBURGH**	**2-2**	**3.63**	**36**	**0**	**1**	**52.0**	**41**	**13**	**46**
						Indianapolis (AAA)	1-2	4.00	13	0	0	18.0	13	3	18
50	Jameson Taillon	R-R	6-5	220	11/18/91	**PITTSBURGH**	**5-4**	**3.38**	**18**	**18**	**0**	**104.0**	**99**	**17**	**85**
						Indianapolis (AAA)	4-2	2.04	10	10	0	61.2	44	6	61
44	Tony Watson	L-L	6-4	225	5/30/85	**PITTSBURGH**	**2-5**	**3.06**	**70**	**0**	**15**	**67.2**	**52**	**20**	**58**
51	Tyler Webb	R-L	6-6	225	7/20/90	Scranton/WB (AAA)	4-3	3.59	36	5	1	72.2	67	23	82
57	Trevor Williams	R-R	6-3	230	4/25/92	**PITTSBURGH**	**1-1**	**7.82**	**7**	**1**	**0**	**12.2**	**19**	**5**	**11**
						Indianapolis (AAA)	9-6	2.53	20	19	0	110.1	103	30	74
						Bradenton (A)	1-0	0.00	1	1	0	5.0	4	0	4

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
29	Francisco Cervelli	R-R	6-1	210	3/6/86	**PITTSBURGH**	**.264**	**101**	**326**	**42**	**86**	**1**	**33**	**56**	**72**	**6**
						Indianapolis (AAA)	.400	3	10	1	4	0	1	3	2	0
32	Elias Diaz	R-R	6-1	212	11/17/90	**PITTSBURGH**	**.000**	**2**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**
						Indianapolis (AAA)	.266	25	94	4	25	0	10	3	17	1
						Altoona (AA)	.286	2	7	0	2	0	1	1	1	0
						Bradenton (A)	.391	7	23	6	9	1	5	4	2	0
19	Chris Stewart	R-R	6-4	202	2/19/82	**PITTSBURGH**	**.214**	**34**	**98**	**10**	**21**	**1**	**7**	**12**	**15**	**0**
						Altoona (AA)	.200	10	25	6	5	0	3	8	1	0

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
55	Josh Bell	S-R	6-2	240	8/14/92	**PITTSBURGH**	**.273**	**45**	**128**	**18**	**35**	**3**	**19**	**21**	**19**	**0**
						Indianapolis (AAA)	.295	114	421	57	124	14	60	57	74	3
63	Chris Bostick	R-R	5-10	190	3/24/93	Syracuse (AAA)	.203	64	222	27	45	2	18	16	67	3
						Harrisburg (AA)	.290	71	262	34	76	6	33	25	58	8
26	Adam Frazier	L-R	5-9	178	12/14/91	**PITTSBURGH**	**.301**	**66**	**146**	**21**	**44**	**2**	**11**	**12**	**26**	**4**
						Indianapolis (AAA)	.333	68	261	34	87	0	22	29	27	17
23	David Freese	R-R	6-2	225	4/28/83	**PITTSBURGH**	**.270**	**141**	**437**	**63**	**118**	**13**	**55**	**45**	**142**	**0**
37	Alen Hanson	S-R	5-11	175	10/22/92	**PITTSBURGH**	**.226**	**27**	**31**	**5**	**7**	**0**	**1**	**2**	**5**	**2**
						Indianapolis (AAA)	.266	110	432	58	115	8	32	32	78	36
5	Josh Harrison	R-R	5-8	190	7/8/87	**PITTSBURGH**	**.283**	**131**	**487**	**57**	**138**	**4**	**59**	**18**	**76**	**19**
28	John Jaso	L-R	6-2	202	9/19/83	**PITTSBURGH**	**.268**	**132**	**380**	**45**	**102**	**8**	**42**	**45**	**74**	**0**
16	Jung Ho Kang	R-R	6-0	210	4/5/87	**PITTSBURGH**	**.255**	**103**	**318**	**45**	**81**	**21**	**62**	**36**	**79**	**3**
						Indianapolis (AAA)	.146	16	48	5	7	2	7	7	11	0
10	Jordy Mercer	R-R	6-3	205	8/27/86	**PITTSBURGH**	**.256**	**149**	**519**	**66**	**133**	**11**	**59**	**51**	**83**	**1**
62	Max Moroff	S-R	5-10	185	5/13/93	**PITTSBURGH**	**.000**	**2**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**2**	**0**
						Indianapolis (AAA)	.230	133	421	61	97	8	45	90	129	9
61	Gift Ngoepe	R-R	5-8	200	1/18/90	Indianapolis (AAA)	.217	102	332	40	72	8	27	31	130	5
15	Jason Rogers	R-R	6-1	260	3/13/88	**PITTSBURGH**	**.080**	**23**	**25**	**2**	**2**	**0**	**2**	**7**	**9**	**0**
						Indianapolis (AAA)	.263	105	372	38	98	6	40	43	78	1

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
6	Starling Marte	R-R	6-1	190	10/9/88	**PITTSBURGH**	**.311**	**129**	**489**	**71**	**152**	**9**	**46**	**23**	**104**	**47**
22	Andrew McCutchen	R-R	5-10	195	10/10/86	**PITTSBURGH**	**.256**	**153**	**598**	**81**	**153**	**24**	**79**	**69**	**143**	**6**
64	Jose Osuna	R-R	6-3	230	12/12/92	Indianapolis (AAA)	.291	63	220	27	64	7	31	13	36	2
						Altoona (AA)	.269	70	253	34	68	6	38	23	44	1
25	Gregory Polanco	L-L	6-5	230	9/14/91	**PITTSBURGH**	**.258**	**144**	**527**	**79**	**136**	**22**	**86**	**53**	**119**	**17**

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

WILL CRAIG, 3B

The Pirates chose the right-handed-hitting slugger with 22nd overall selection after he had a standout career at Wake Forest. However, Craig hit with little power in his pro debut. He had just two home runs in 274 plate appearances over 63 games with short-season West Virginia, though the 22-year-old batted .280 and had a .412 on-base percentage. Craig has a strong arm, but a lack of range is likely to cause him to eventually move to first base. While Craig shows a good batting eye, he is a well-below-average runner. In college, Craig was one of the top hitters in the Atlantic Coast Conference as he hit .347 with 37 home runs in 162 games over three seasons. He also served as the closer last spring and notched nine saves with a 3.54 ERA in 19 games.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Austin Meadows, OF (21) The first of the Pirates' two first-round picks in 2013, Meadows reached Triple-A at 21. Only an average arm keeps him from being a five-tool player.

2. Mitch Keller, RHP (20) Keller had a breakout season at Low-A West Virginia, going 8–5 with a 2.46 ERA in 23 starts while showing a fastball in the mid-90s and a plus curveball.

3. Tyler Glasnow, RHP (23) Glasnow is reminiscent of a young right-handed Randy Johnson as he stands 6'8", throws his fastball in the high 90s and has allowed 4.43 walks per nine innings over five minor-league seasons.

4. Josh Bell, 1B/OF (24) The switch-hitter made his major-league debut last season and hit .273 with three homers in 45 games. Figures to be the Opening Day first baseman.

5. Kevin Newman, SS (23) The Pirates' first-round draft pick in 2015 had a fine first full pro season in 2016 as he hit a combined .320 between High-A Bradenton and Class AA Altoona while playing solid defense.

6. Steven Brault, LHP (24) Brault made his major-league debut last season and figures to begin this season in the rotation.

7. Ke'Bryan Hayes, 3B (20) The son of former major-league third baseman Charlie Hayes uses an all-fields approach to hitting and should develop more power.

8. Cole Tucker, SS (20) The Pirates' first-round pick in 2014 intrigues with his power potential, speed and makeup.

9. Jose Osuna, 1B/OF (24) In an organization that lacks power hitters, Osuna will be a step away from the majors at Indianapolis.

10. Will Craig, 3B (22) Though he spent 2016 in short-season ball, the Pirates feel Craig is advanced enough that he will likely start this season at Bradenton.

ST. LOUIS CARDINALS

Long before they yielded the division and saw their archrivals, for the first time in generations, take the crown, the Cardinals lost their way. An uncharacteristic Cardinals team had an uncharacteristic finish, out of the playoffs for the first time since 2010 and looking up at the champion Cubs for the first time in 108 years. A culprit in the Cardinals' slip to second place was shoddy defense and a plodding lineup that proved a stark contrast to the fundamental dynamos that won 100 games in 2015. To correct the drift, general manager John Mozeliak sought a team that was more athletic, stingier defensively. He started by plucking the Cubs' leadoff hitter, Dexter Fowler, to be his own. That allows Matt Carpenter to bat third and will give the Cardinals three on-base monsters atop the order, enough to compensate for a drain in sluggers.

By revisiting the club's roots, Mozeliak desires a "more exciting" team. He wants it to look familiar because the view isn't. Chased for years, the Cardinals are now chasing.

ROTATION The rotation slipped from an MLB-best 2.99 ERA in 2015 to a 13th-best and resolutely average 4.33 ERA in 2016. The truth is somewhere in between, and a more reliable defense will help a ground-ball-greedy staff get there. So will the return of stalwart Lance Lynn from elbow surgery and the revival of Adam Wainwright after the most frustrating year of the ace's career. Lynn, Wainwright and Carlos Martinez put three All-Stars atop the rotation, and Mike Leake will benefit most from improved gloves behind him. That seasoned foursome can become an assembly line of quality starts. That depth matches any contender in the league. The punctuation at No. 5 is an exclamation point. Rookie Alex Reyes is arguably the finest pitching prospect in baseball, and he'll offset any inconsistencies of youth with an elite fastball that sped his ascent and will be a fixture into the future.

BULLPEN The crater for the Cardinals could have come a lot sooner if not for the presence of the "Stone Buddha." Nicknamed that for his stoicism, Seung-hwan Oh finished one save shy of being the sixth rookie ever with 20 and 100 strikeouts. When All-Star Trevor Rosenthal fizzled due to an injury, Oh inherited the ninth and showed who is boss. Oh, known as "The Final Boss" in Asia, returns to close, but Rosenthal is back too — perhaps in a role just as vital. The Cardinals intend to "stretch out" Rosenthal so that he could start or be used as a multi-inning reliever. With power righthanders Rosenthal and Michael Wacha possibly in the bullpen, they'll pair with two lefties, newcomer Brett Cecil and holdover Kevin Siegrist, for an eight-limbed bridge to Oh. In a variation of what teams popularized in October, those left-right combos could be utilized aggressively in high-leverage, late-inning binds. A key part of playing cleaner, tighter games is shortening games, and the bullpen is armed with rock-solid options, sharpened for an edge.

MIDDLE INFIELD The pivot from the team the Cardinals were to the team they intend to be again is up the middle, where second baseman Kolten Wong can bloom as shortstop Aledmys Diaz did in 2016. Wong personifies the athletic, energetic, frenetic style the Cardinals want to employ. Wong's turnaround would follow a trend. Less than 12 months removed from being designated for assignment, Diaz was an All-Star. His .369 on-base percentage led all rookies, and his 17 homers were the most ever by a Cardinals middle-infield rookie. Diaz can improve and stick as an impact shortstop, while Wong must emerge and star at second. Unsteadiness from either could undermine the desired defense and lineup's pep, leaving the Cardinals not only to rethink their approach but also to recast it.

CORNERS One of the first changes of the winter was more of a promise. Carpenter had been an All-Star at second and third and was selected as an All-Star in 2016 while playing everywhere. Repurposed as a super-utility infielder, he appeared in at least 40 games at three different positions. Manager Mike Matheny phoned Carpenter this winter to tell him he was the everyday first baseman. He's a defensive upgrade and a fit for an offense-forward position. Carpenter's move opens third for Jhonny Peralta. Hand surgery cost him his job at shortstop and sapped his production. The Cardinals are banking on a bounce-back year for the veteran who led the team in homers in 2014. Jedd Gyorko will challenge for playing time at third after leading the team with 30 homers in 2016.

OUTFIELD Since 2014, the only regular center fielder to have a higher slugging percentage than Randal Grichuk was the player drafted immediately after him in 2009, Mike Trout. Grichuk's .495 is well off Trout's MVP-level .567, but it hints at what the Cards are trying to tap by moving Grichuk to left. Matt Holliday's departure for the Yankees after seven-plus seasons as a pillar leaves left unmanned, and in their effort to improve the overall outfield defense, the Cardinals want to give Grichuk a run there.

2017 PREDICTION
2nd
NL Central

2016 RECORD
86-76

HOME: 38-43 **ROAD:** 48-33

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

TEAM INFO

BUSCH STADIUM
Opened: 2006 **Capacity:** 46,660
Left: 336' **Center:** 400' **Right:** 335'
Tickets: 374-345-9600
stlouis.cardinals.mlb.com

➤ FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
OF Stephen Piscotty

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
RHP Carlos Martinez

BULL MARKET
OF Randal Grichuk

BEAR MARKET
SS Aledmys Diaz

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
RHP Lance Lynn

IPO RHP Alex Reyes

FUTURES MARKET C Carson Kelly

INSIDER TIP There are pitching opportunities here that won't break the bank – Martinez to go "next level," Reyes as the game's best rookie pitcher, Lynn getting healthy and Wainwright bouncing back.

➤ STATLINE

OPS, 1ST TIME IN GAME FACING STARTER: 2016

1. Dexter Fowler, Cubs	**1.203**
2. Daniel Murphy, Nationals	1.062
3. Mookie Betts, Red Sox	1.052
4. David Ortiz, Red Sox	1.048
5. Jean Segura, D-backs	1.046

(min. 100 PAs, 1st time facing)

Tom DiPace

➤ PROJECTED LINEUP

NEXT LEVEL

LINEUP

CF	Dexter Fowler (S)
SS	**Aledmys Diaz (R)**
1B	Matt Carpenter (L)
RF	Stephen Piscotty (R)
LF	Randal Grichuk (R)
3B	Jhonny Peralta (R)
C	Yadier Molina (R)
2B	Kolten Wong (L)

BENCH

1B	Matt Adams (L)
INF	**Jedd Gyorko (R)**
C	Eric Fryer (R)
OF	Tommy Pham (R)
INF	Greg Garcia (L)

ROTATION

RHP	Adam Wainwright
RHP	Carlos Martinez
RHP	Lance Lynn
RHP	**Mike Leake**
RHP	Alex Reyes

BULLPEN

RHP	Seung-hwan Oh (Closer)
RHP	**Trevor Rosenthal**
LHP	Brett Cecil
RHP	Jonathan Broxton
LHP	Kevin Siegrist
RHP	Michael Wacha
RHP	Matt Bowman

Aledmys Diaz ranked fifth among rookies in WAR (2.7), sixth in on-base percentage (.369), seventh in batting average (.300) and homers (17), and eighth in slugging percentage (.510).

Jedd Gyorko's home run per fly ball rate shot up 9.7 points to a career-high 24.4 percent, eighth best in baseball among hitters with at least 400 PAs.

Mike Leake struggled to a 4.69 ERA in his first season in St. Louis in part because he stranded a league-low 65.6 percent of his baserunners. His strand rate had never dipped below 71.0 percent.

Trevor Rosenthal's 14.7 percent walk rate was surpassed only by Hunter Cervenka among relievers with at least 40 innings.

➤ SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE CARDINALS

"I'm always a little skeptical of a player you could have gotten for half the price a year ago, but they didn't overpay by too much for Dexter Fowler. He gets on base, he switch-hits, and if he's below average in center, it's only by a little. Moving Matt Carpenter to first base is a surprise to me, but it does help sort out the rest of that roster. I like their rotation a lot, even with Adam Wainwright on the decline. He can still be effective, and Carlos Martinez is the real deal. So is Alex Reyes. He might be the best pitching prospect in baseball. They gave Brett Cecil a lot of money as their main lefty in the bullpen, but he's very good, and so is Seung-hwan Oh. The Cardinals got Oh from South Korea and Aledmys Diaz from Cuba — without a lot of hype — on multiyear deals that are providing a lot of value. There's a reason they're still a model organization."

➤ STATISTICIAN

.381	Combined on-base percentage in 2016 for the likely top three hitters in Cardinals' 2017 order: Dexter Fowler, Aledmys Diaz and Matt Carpenter.
0	Gold Glove Awards won in 2016 by Cardinals, a first since 2007 and ending Yadier Molina's run of eight consecutive.
25	Jersey number Fowler will wear, the first player to do so for the Cardinals since Mark McGwire returned in 2001.
37	Years the Cardinals went between appearances by a home-grown shortstop in the All-Star Game, from Garry Templeton (1979) to Aledmys Diaz (2016).
38–43	Record at home in 2016, the first losing record in Busch Stadium III's history and first time in Mike Matheny's tenure with fewer than 50 home wins.
60	Home runs lost with the departures of Brandon Moss (28), Matt Holliday (20), and Jeremy Hazelbaker (12).

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2 CHC	3	4 CHC	5 CHC	6	7 CIN	8 CIN
9 CIN	10 WAS	11 WAS	12 WAS	13	14 NYY	15 NYY
16 NYY	17 PIT	18 PIT	19 PIT	20 MIL	21 MIL	22 MIL
23 MIL	24	25 TOR	26 TOR	27 TOR	28 CIN	29 CIN
30 CIN						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 MIL	2 MIL	3 MIL	4 MIL	5 ATL	6 ATL
7 ATL	8 MIA	9 MIA	10 MIA	11	12 CHC	13 CHC
14 CHC	15	16 BOS	17 BOS	18	19 SF	20 SF
21 SF	22	23 LAD	24 LAD	25 LAD	26 COL	27 COL
28 COL	29 LAD	30 LAD	31 LAD			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 LAD	2 CHC	3 CHC
4 CHC	5 CIN	6 CIN	7 CIN	8 CIN	9 PHI	10 PHI
11 PHI	12	13 MIL	14 MIL	15 MIL	16 BAL	17 BAL
18 BAL	19	20 PHI	21 PHI	22 PHI	23 PIT	24 PIT
25 PIT	26	27 ARI	28 ARI	29 ARI	30 WAS	

July

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 WAS
2 WAS	3 MIA	4 MIA	5 MIA	6 MIA	7 NYM	8 NYM
9 NYM	10	11	12	13	14 PIT	15 PIT
16 PIT	17 NYM	18 NYM	19 NYM	20 NYM	21 CHC	22 CHC
23 CHC	24 COL	25 COL	26 COL	27 ARI	28 ARI	29 ARI
30 ARI	31					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 MIL	2 MIL	3 MIL	4 CIN	5 CIN
6 CIN	7 KC	8 KC	9 KC	10 KC	11 ATL	12 ATL
13 ATL	14	15 BOS	16 BOS	17 PIT	18 PIT	19 PIT
20 PIT	21	22 SD	23 SD	24 SD	25 TB	26 TB
27 TB	28	29 MIL	30 MIL	31 SF		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 SF	2 SF
3 SF	4 SD	5 SD	6 SD	7 SD	8 PIT	9 PIT
10 PIT	11	12 CIN	13 CIN	14 CIN	15 CHC	16 CHC
17 CHC	18	19 CIN	20 CIN	21 CIN	22 PIT	23 PIT
24 PIT	25 CHC	26 CHC	27 CHC	28 CHC	29 MIL	30 MIL
1 MIL						

ALEDMYS DIAZ

His OPS (.797) since 2014 would also rank fourth among MLB left fielders. Newcomer Fowler will be flanked by Grichuk and Stephen Piscotty, two above-average fielders.

CATCHING On his way to a career-high 1,218.1 innings behind the plate, Yadier Molina hit .365 with a .529 slugging percentage in the second half. He didn't wear down; he powered up. That will help him, like his team, repeat past accomplishments. The Cardinals re-signed trusted vet Eric Fryer to be the backup, but they also could turn to Carson Kelly, a future starter at the position.

BENCH A strength of last year's team also became a complication for St. Louis. The Cardinals sought a stouter bench to provide both power and positional versatility, traits they thought would help fend off fatigue. The return was a MLB-record 17 pinch-hit homers, but players for so many positions also meant stability at none. Gyorko remains from a model that allowed him to thrive, but around him complements will rule, from savvy pinch-hitter Greg Garcia to outfielder Tommy Pham.

MANAGEMENT Before making moves to retool the roster, the Cardinals gave Matheny job security. He received a three-year extension, one that reaches past many of his players. A clubhouse-first manager whom players see as a gifted motivator, Matheny must shepherd young players into larger, leading roles all while contending. Mozeliak, nearing his 10th anniversary as GM, has restocked the pipeline and given "the coaching staff new tools in their toolbox." His next moves: a new core player to pair with Fowler, and possibly a snazzier title, above GM.

FINAL ANALYSIS After a decade as a regular resident and sometimes king of October, the Cardinals are no longer the organization within their division that others aspire to be. But with stars such as Carpenter (in place) and Reyes (ready to shine) mixed with a style better suited for their ballpark, they are out to prove that 2016 was a brief eclipse. The sun hasn't set on their empire.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

REVOLVING RIVALS When the Cardinals host the Chicago Cubs on April 2, the first batter they send to the plate will be familiar to their archrivals. The last time the Cubs saw Dexter Fowler, he was homering for them in Game 7 of the World Series, leading them to the championship. Fowler's migration to St. Louis as a free agent comes a year after the Cubs poached Jason Heyward and John Lackey from the Cardinals' roster. Fowler's replacement in the outfield for Cubs? Why, a former Cardinal, of course: Jon Jay.

LANCE, A LOT When healthy, Lance Lynn was an unrepentant fastball chucker. Lynn missed all of 2016 recovering from Tommy John surgery, and he returns intent on picking up where he left off — bulldozing his way to 200 innings aboard his fastball and reasserting himself as a reliable, relentless starter who will be a free agent at season's end.

SPRING CLEANING The Cardinals' loose and frayed play throughout 2016 will prompt changes to their spring training schedule, and charged with that will be a new coach on Mike Matheny's staff, quality control coach Mike Shildt. The role's exact responsibilities remain ambiguous, but the Cardinals hope the promotions of Shildt and Oliver Marmol from the minors will add two teachers with strong reputations for fundamentals to a major-league dugout that misplaced such acuity.

STRETCHING ROSEY An All-Star and back-to-back 40-save closer, Trevor Rosenthal never hid his aspirations to be a starter. He'll take a step closer to that wish this spring. The Cardinals intend to "stretch out" Rosenthal so that he could start games — but also so he will pitch multiple innings in relief. In Rosenthal, a power righthander who lost the ninth due to injury, and starter Michael Wacha, the Cardinals see two hybrid relievers — similar to October star Andrew Miller — who could pitch in high-leverage spots without being tethered to the ninth inning.

VIVA CUBA Aware the rules could change and the big-budget behemoths were handcuffed by spending limits, the Cardinals executed a record spending spree on international talent, especially from Cuba. Two years after the Cardinals tiptoed into the market to sign Aledmys Diaz, they signed three young Cubans for bonuses more than $1 million: speedy outfielder Randy Arozarena ($1.25 million); teen leadoff whiz Jonatan Machado ($2.3 million); and 6'6" starter Johan Oviedo ($1.9 million). Machado alone blew past the Cardinals' MLB-imposed spending cap, of $2.0 million. They're taxed on overage.

Tom DiPace

CARDINALS ROSTER

General Manager: John Mozeliak **Manager:** Mike Matheny **Coaches:** David Bell (bench), Blaise Ilsley (bullpen), Derek Lilliquist (pitching), John Mabry (hitting), Chris Maloney (third base), Oliver Marmol (first base), Bill Mueller (asst. hitting), Mike Shildt (quality control)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
67	Matt Bowman	R-R	6-0	175	5/31/91	**ST. LOUIS**	**2-5**	**3.46**	**59**	**0**	**0**	**67.2**	**59**	**20**	**52**
30	Jonathan Broxton	R-R	6-4	285	6/16/84	**ST. LOUIS**	**4-2**	**4.30**	**66**	**0**	**0**	**60.2**	**52**	**24**	**57**
21	Brett Cecil	R-L	6-3	235	7/2/86	**TORONTO**	**1-7**	**3.93**	**54**	**0**	**0**	**36.2**	**39**	**8**	**45**
						Buffalo (AAA)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	2.0	1	0	0
						Dunedin (A)	0-0	4.50	2	0	0	2.0	2	0	4
29	Zach Duke	L-L	6-2	210	4/19/83	**ST. LOUIS**	**0-1**	**1.93**	**28**	**0**	**1**	**23.1**	**17**	**13**	**26**
						CHICAGO AL	**2-0**	**2.63**	**53**	**0**	**1**	**37.2**	**31**	**16**	**42**
	John Gant	R-R	6-3	200	8/6/92	**ATLANTA**	**1-4**	**4.86**	**20**	**7**	**0**	**50.0**	**54**	**21**	**49**
						Gwinnett (AAA)	3-3	4.18	12	10	0	56.0	58	22	57
						Rome (A)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	3.0	1	1	2
56	Marco Gonzales	L-L	6-1	195	2/16/92	Injured — Missed Season									
8	Mike Leake	R-R	5-10	170	11/12/87	**ST. LOUIS**	**9-12**	**4.69**	**30**	**30**	**0**	**176.2**	**203**	**30**	**125**
31	Lance Lynn	R-R	6-5	280	5/12/87	Springfield (AA)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	3.0	3	0	3
						Palm Beach (A)	0-0	2.45	2	2	0	3.2	4	0	4
70	Tyler Lyons	L-L	6-4	210	2/21/88	**ST. LOUIS**	**2-0**	**3.38**	**30**	**0**	**0**	**48.0**	**35**	**14**	**46**
18	Carlos Martinez	R-R	6-0	190	9/21/91	**ST. LOUIS**	**16-9**	**3.04**	**31**	**31**	**0**	**195.1**	**169**	**70**	**174**
59	Mike Mayers	R-R	6-3	200	12/6/91	**ST. LOUIS**	**1-1**	**27.00**	**4**	**1**	**0**	**5.1**	**16**	**3**	**2**
						Memphis (AAA)	4-8	3.73	16	16	0	89.1	87	31	84
						Springfield (AA)	5-2	2.30	9	9	0	54.2	47	17	43
26	Seung-hwan Oh	R-R	5-10	205	7/15/82	**ST. LOUIS**	**6-3**	**1.92**	**76**	**0**	**19**	**79.2**	**55**	**18**	**103**
61	Alex Reyes	R-R	6-3	175	8/29/94	**ST. LOUIS**	**4-1**	**1.57**	**12**	**5**	**1**	**46.0**	**33**	**23**	**52**
						Memphis (AAA)	2-3	4.96	14	14	0	65.1	63	32	93
44	Trevor Rosenthal	R-R	6-2	230	5/29/90	**ST. LOUIS**	**2-4**	**4.46**	**45**	**0**	**14**	**40.1**	**48**	**29**	**56**
46	Kevin Siegrist	L-L	6-5	230	7/20/89	**ST. LOUIS**	**6-3**	**2.77**	**67**	**0**	**3**	**61.2**	**42**	**26**	**66**
63	Miguel Socolovich	R-R	6-1	205	7/24/86	**ST. LOUIS**	**1-0**	**2.00**	**15**	**0**	**0**	**18.0**	**5**	**5**	**16**
						Memphis (AAA)	2-6	3.14	45	0	5	51.2	42	16	59
64	Sam Tuivailala	R-R	6-3	225	10/19/92	**ST. LOUIS**	**0-0**	**6.00**	**12**	**0**	**0**	**9.0**	**12**	**6**	**7**
						Memphis (AAA)	3-2	5.21	42	0	17	46.2	47	22	72
52	Michael Wacha	R-R	6-6	215	7/1/91	**ST. LOUIS**	**7-7**	**5.09**	**27**	**24**	**0**	**138.0**	**159**	**45**	**114**
50	Adam Wainwright	R-R	6-7	235	8/30/81	**ST. LOUIS**	**13-9**	**4.62**	**33**	**33**	**0**	**198.2**	**220**	**59**	**161**
62	Luke Weaver	R-R	6-2	170	8/21/93	**ST. LOUIS**	**1-4**	**5.70**	**9**	**8**	**0**	**36.1**	**46**	**12**	**45**
						Memphis (AAA)	1-0	0.00	1	1	0	6.0	2	2	4
						Springfield (AA)	6-3	1.40	12	12	0	77.0	63	10	88
	Rowan Wick	L-R	6-3	220	11/9/92	Springfield (AA)	0-0	4.12	21	0	0	19.2	14	14	20
						Palm Beach (A)	2-0	1.09	23	0	6	24.2	16	6	37

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	Eric Fryer	R-R	6-2	215	8/26/85	**ST. LOUIS**	**.368**	**24**	**38**	**7**	**14**	**0**	**5**	**3**	**7**	**0**
						PITTSBURGH	**.218**	**36**	**78**	**12**	**17**	**0**	**8**	**10**	**18**	**0**
71	Carson Kelly	R-R	6-2	220	7/14/94	**ST. LOUIS**	**.154**	**10**	**13**	**1**	**2**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**2**	**0**
						Memphis (AAA)	.292	32	113	14	33	0	14	11	17	0
						Springfield (AA)	.287	64	216	29	62	6	18	14	46	0
4	Yadier Molina	R-R	5-11	205	7/13/82	**ST. LOUIS**	**.307**	**147**	**534**	**56**	**164**	**8**	**58**	**39**	**63**	**3**

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
32	Matt Adams	L-R	6-3	260	8/31/88	**ST. LOUIS**	**.249**	**118**	**297**	**37**	**74**	**16**	**54**	**25**	**81**	**0**
						Memphis (AAA)	.188	5	16	4	3	1	2	4	3	0
	Eliezer Alvarez	L-R	5-11	165	10/15/94	Peoria (A)	.323	116	433	70	140	6	59	53	96	36
13	Matt Carpenter	L-R	6-3	205	11/26/85	**ST. LOUIS**	**.271**	**129**	**473**	**81**	**128**	**21**	**68**	**81**	**108**	**0**
						Springfield (AA)	.333	4	12	2	4	1	1	1	4	0
36	Aledmys Diaz	R-R	6-1	195	8/1/90	**ST. LOUIS**	**.300**	**111**	**404**	**71**	**121**	**17**	**65**	**41**	**60**	**4**
						Palm Beach (A)	.167	2	6	0	1	0	0	2	0	0
35	Greg Garcia	L-R	6-0	190	8/8/89	**ST. LOUIS**	**.276**	**99**	**214**	**33**	**59**	**3**	**17**	**38**	**50**	**1**
						Memphis (AAA)	.269	30	104	13	28	0	8	11	20	2
3	Jedd Gyorko	R-R	5-10	215	9/23/88	**ST. LOUIS**	**.243**	**128**	**400**	**58**	**97**	**30**	**59**	**37**	**96**	**0**
27	Jhonny Peralta	R-R	6-2	225	5/28/82	**ST. LOUIS**	**.260**	**82**	**289**	**37**	**75**	**8**	**29**	**20**	**56**	**0**
						Springfield (AA)	.000	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
						Palm Beach (A)	.286	4	14	2	4	0	1	2	0	0
						Peoria (A)	.231	5	13	2	3	0	0	0	1	0
	Edmundo Sosa	R-R	5-11	170	3/6/96	Palm Beach (A)	.294	9	34	3	10	0	4	1	8	0
						Peoria (A)	.268	88	351	42	94	3	30	19	71	5
	Breyvic Valera	S-R	5-11	160	1/8/92	Memphis (AAA)	.341	73	217	32	74	0	31	31	22	8
						Springfield (AA)	.258	52	178	16	46	0	12	9	18	3
16	Kolten Wong	L-R	5-9	185	10/10/90	**ST. LOUIS**	**.240**	**121**	**313**	**39**	**75**	**5**	**23**	**34**	**52**	**7**
						Memphis (AAA)	.429	7	28	10	12	4	11	4	6	1

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
25	Dexter Fowler	S-R	6-5	195	3/22/86	**CHICAGO NL**	**.276**	**125**	**456**	**84**	**126**	**13**	**48**	**79**	**124**	**13**
81	Anthony Garcia	R-R	6-0	180	1/4/92	Memphis (AAA)	.229	70	218	25	50	8	27	20	44	1
						Springfield (AA)	.254	37	122	17	31	3	16	11	24	2
15	Randal Grichuk	R-R	6-1	205	8/13/91	**ST. LOUIS**	**.240**	**132**	**446**	**66**	**107**	**24**	**68**	**28**	**141**	**5**
						Memphis (AAA)	.272	23	81	12	22	6	18	2	14	0
58	Jose Martinez	R-R	6-6	215	7/25/88	**ST. LOUIS**	**.438**	**12**	**16**	**4**	**7**	**0**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**0**
						Memphis (AAA)	.269	87	301	34	81	8	42	25	50	9
						Omaha (AAA)	.298	37	141	18	42	3	18	14	24	2
28	Tommy Pham	R-R	6-1	210	3/8/88	**ST. LOUIS**	**.226**	**78**	**159**	**26**	**36**	**9**	**17**	**20**	**71**	**2**
						Memphis (AAA)	.236	33	110	15	26	3	17	18	29	8
						Springfield (AA)	.357	4	14	3	5	1	2	3	3	0
55	Stephen Piscotty	R-R	6-3	210	1/14/91	**ST. LOUIS**	**.273**	**153**	**582**	**86**	**159**	**22**	**85**	**51**	**133**	**7**
	Magneuris Sierra	L-L	5-11	160	4/7/96	Peoria (A)	.307	122	524	78	161	3	60	22	97	31

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

DELVIN PEREZ, SS

The Cardinals had not selected higher than 13th in the past decade and had long accepted the reality they'd never score a top-10 talent. And then Perez slipped to them. A report surfaced on the eve of the draft that Perez had tested positive for performance-enhancing drugs. The Puerto Rican teen tumbled to No. 23, where the Cardinals pounced for a $2.2 million bonus. Arguably the best middle infielder available in the draft, Perez has a lithe, 6'3" frame and a quick-twitch athleticism that has drawn comparisons to Carlos Correa, Houston's All-Star. He has smooth instincts at shortstop and will remain at the position as he advances, and his bat proved more than expected in his pro debut. He hit .294 with a .352 on-base percentage at rookie ball. He can drill fastballs, and his bat speed and hand strength hint at more power as he matures.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Alex Reyes, RHP (22) Power prospect struck out 145 batters in 111.1 innings in Class AAA and the bigs combined in 2016. He'll be a favorite for NL Rookie of the Year.

2. Luke Weaver, RHP (23) Steady, reliable strike thrower has more horsepower than his slight frame suggests. A 1.30 ERA in the minors positions him to be MLB-ready.

3. Delvin Perez, SS (18) Cardinals intend to nurture teen phenom along deliberately, though they'll clear a path for his ascension.

4. Carson Kelly, C (22) Former third baseman is heir apparent to Yadier Molina. A minor-league Gold Glove winner in 2015, Kelly hit .289 with .738 OPS.

5. Magneuris Sierra, OF (20) Left-handed-hitting, left-handed-throwing and ultra-athletic future leadoff hitter batted .307 and stole 31 bases at Low-A Peoria.

6. Sandy Alcantara, RHP (21) Surged ahead with electric repertoire that includes a fastball clocked at 102 mph (sits at 96 mph) and two polished off-speed pitches.

7. Harrison Bader, OF (22) Spring-loaded and broad-shouldered, former Gator pummeled Class AA pitching with a 17-game hitting streak and 16 homers.

8. Dakota Hudson, RHP (22) Mississippi State product zoomed to Class AA, riding a 97-mph fastball and already the best slider in the organization.

9. Eliezer Alvarez, 2B (22) Had a breakout summer as Midwest League's stolen-base leader (36) and the second-best OPS (.879). The production finally matched the tools.

10. Randy Arozarena, CF (22) Shined in Mexico (.382 OBP), and raw ability could move him fast — around the bases and in the system.

ARIZONA DIAMONDBACKS

2017 PREDICTION
4th
NL West

2016 RECORD
69-93

HOME: 33-48 **ROAD:** 36-45

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

TEAM INFO

CHASE FIELD
Opened: 1998 **Capacity:** 48,633
Left: 330' **Center:** 407' **Right:** 334'
Tickets: 602-462-6600
arizona.diamondbacks.mlb.com

➤ FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
1B Paul Goldschmidt

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
RHP Zack Greinke

BULL MARKET
UT Brandon Drury

BEAR MARKET
RHP Archie Bradley

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
OF A.J. Pollock

IPO RHP Tyler Jones

FUTURES MARKET LHP Anthony Banda

INSIDER TIP Bradley has been overrated, but compared to 2016, there is upside in the rotation all over the place. Greinke can be an ace again; Shelby Miller recovered late; Robbie Ray is a strikeout machine; and Taijuan Walker has lofty potential.

➤ STATLINE

FIRST-PITCH SWING %: 2016

1. Yasmany Tomas, Diamondbacks	**49.0**
2. Adam Jones, Orioles	44.5
3. Corey Seager, Dodgers	42.5
4. Jonathan Schoop, Orioles	41.3
5. Yadier Molina, Cardinals	40.5

(min. 502 PAs)

Tom DiPace

The Diamondbacks are starting over again this year after firing general manager Dave Stewart and manager Chip Hale two years after their last redo. Injuries had a lot to do with the D-backs' troubles last year, and they believe with health will come the success that was expected when Zack Greinke signed his $206.5 million deal before 2016. The lineup is strong. The young starters must take the next step forward.

ROTATION Greinke is the mainstay, one of the few true aces in the majors. He missed six weeks with a strained oblique muscle in the middle of last season but still won 13 games, hitting double digits for the ninth season — tied for seventh among active pitchers. No one expected another 1.66 ERA as he had with the Dodgers in 2015, but 4.37 was uncharacteristically high, as were the 23 homers allowed. Lefthander Robbie Ray will slot in behind Greinke after establishing himself in his first full season in the rotation. He struck out 218 in 174.1 innings but had bouts of inconsistency as indicated by his 4.90 ERA. Righthander Taijuan Walker was added in an offseason trade that sent Jean Segura to Seattle, and the D-backs are hopeful that Walker will be able to harness his above-average stuff that includes a mid-90s fastball. Former No. 1 pick Archie Bradley also took a step forward last year, but the rotation was hurt by subpar seasons from Shelby Miller and Patrick Corbin, who began 2016 as the Nos. 2-3 starters. Miller, obtained from Atlanta in the deal that sent 2015 No. 1 overall draft pick Dansby Swanson to Atlanta, was returned to the minors for a brief spell after the All-Star break to try to work through his issues. Corbin, an All-Star before missing the 2014 campaign because of Tommy John surgery, spent the final month of the season in the bullpen. The final two or three spots in the rotation may not be settled until late in spring training.

BULLPEN Fernando Rodney signed a team-friendly $2.5 million free-agent deal that includes options if he is the team's closer, a role the D-backs had trouble filling after trading Brad Ziegler to Boston before the 2016 All-Star break. Rodney will turn 40 in spring training. No amount of hat-angling can change that, but his stuff still seems good. Rodney was 17-for-17 in save situations with San Diego the first half of last season before struggling when taken out of that role following a trade to Miami. Righthanders Enrique Burgos and Jake Barrett have big arms, and both feature mid-90s fastballs. Each was given a shot at the closer job over the final two months, with mixed results. Under-the-radar righthander Randall Delgado made 79 appearances last year. Lefty Andrew Chafin battled injuries. Righty Tyler Jones throws hard, and as a Rule 5 pick he must be offered back to the Yankees if he does not make the Opening Day roster.

MIDDLE INFIELD This is the least settled spot on the diamond, although it is not without talent. Career third baseman Brandon Drury, who swung a good bat while playing out of position in the corner outfield spots last year, is a top candidate at second base after being told over the winter to concentrate on the infield. Drury has a potent bat with doubles pop, and one major-league talent evaluator said Drury could be a Jeff Kent-type at second. Nick Ahmed is a top-tier defender and has been the starting shortstop the last two seasons after winning battles each spring, but he missed the final two months of 2016 after undergoing hip surgery. His bat still needs some work.

CORNERS Perennial All-Star Paul Goldschmidt is one of the most productive and durable players in the majors, among the handful of superstars — although you could never convince him of that. He hits, hits for power, steals bases and plays a Gold Glove first base. On top of that, he is a clubhouse leader. Third baseman Jake Lamb made some adjustments to his offensive approach before last season and looked like a new man before a thumb injury slowed him in the second half. Lamb was overlooked for the 2016 All-Star Game despite having 20 homers at the break.

OUTFIELD The fractured right elbow suffered by A.J. Pollock three days before the start of the 2016 season changed everything, and the D-backs believe his return could do the same this year. Pollock was the most productive center fielder in the NL in 2015 but played only 12 games last year, and the D-backs missed not only his speed/power production but also his defensive skill set. Yasmany Tomas supplies numbers — he had career highs with 31 homers and 83 RBIs in his second full season — but leaves a lot to be desired defensively at either corner. David Peralta is expected back in right field after a wrist injury cost him most of last year, and his left-handed bat helps to balance a lineup that skews right.

CATCHING Veteran Jeff Mathis signed a two-year free-agent deal over the winter in a nod to pitch-framing metrics, and he is expected to take over as Greinke's personal catcher, a role that was held by since-depart-

PROJECTED LINEUP

LINEUP

CF	A.J. Pollock (R)
1B	**Paul Goldschmidt (R)**
3B	Jake Lamb (L)
LF	Yasmany Tomas (R)
RF	David Peralta (L)
2B	Brandon Drury (R)
C	Jeff Mathis (R)
SS	Nick Ahmed (R)

BENCH

C	Chris Herrmann (L)
INF	**Chris Owings (R)**
INF	Ketel Marte (S)
OF	Socrates Brito (L)
OF	Jeremy Hazelbaker (L)

ROTATION

RHP	Zack Greinke
LHP	**Robbie Ray**
RHP	Taijuan Walker
RHP	Archie Bradley
RHP	Shelby Miller

BULLPEN

RHP	Fernando Rodney (Closer)
RHP	Enrique Burgos
RHP	Jake Barrett
RHP	**Randall Delgado**
LHP	Andrew Chafin
LHP	Patrick Corbin
RHP	Tyler Jones

NEXT LEVEL

Paul Goldschmidt's .411 on-base percentage ranked fourth in baseball last season. Since 2013, he owns a .412 on-base percentage, which ranks third behind only Joey Votto and Mike Trout.

Chris Owings' BA rose from .227 to .277 thanks to a rise in BABIP from .305 to .334 and a drop in strikeout rate from 26.1 to 18.7 percent.

Robbie Ray had the largest differential between his FIP (3.76) and ERA (4.90) among qualified starters. His peripherals (28.1 percent strikeout rate, 9.2 percent walk rate) indicate he is a well-above-average starter.

Randall Delgado posted a walk rate above 10 percent for the fourth time in five seasons. He is one of nine relievers to do so.

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE DIAMONDBACKS

"I thought they'd be contenders, but boy, they just didn't do anything. Big disappointment. The good news is their rotation should be a positive for them. Zack Greinke will be better, Taijuan Walker will help them, and Robbie Ray's got a great arm. Shelby Miller had one of those years where everything that could go wrong did. He's got the stuff to bounce back and be a solid starter once again. It's hard to overstate how big the loss of A.J. Pollock was last year, so getting him back will be huge all the way around. They'll miss Jean Segura at short, but Nick Ahmed can really catch the ball. The catching position provides little to no offense for them, and I really wonder how many times Paul Goldschmidt will walk. He just does not have a great deal of support. They're definitely a long shot to make the playoffs."

STATISTICIAN

5.09	Diamondbacks' ERA in 2016, highest in the majors.
4	All-Star appearances by Paul Goldschmidt, the most in franchise history.
.820	OPS by the Diamondbacks against left-handed pitchers, tops in the majors a year ago.
11.25	Strikeouts per nine innings by lefty Robbie Ray, second among NL qualifiers.
6	Months last season in which Jean Segura had at least 30 hits, a franchise first and the first in the majors since Hanley Ramirez and Jimmy Rollins in 2007.
9	10-victory seasons by Zack Greinke, tied for seventh among active pitchers.
29	Pitchers used in 2016, a club record.
7	Multi-homer games by Yasmany Tomas in 2016, the most in the majors.

PAUL GOLDSCHMIDT

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2 SF	3	4 SF	5 SF	6 SF	7 CLE	8 CLE
9 CLE	10 SF	11 SF	12 SF	13	14 LAD	15 LAD
16 LAD	17 LAD	18 SD	19 SD	20 SD	21 LAD	22 LAD
23 LAD	24 SD	25 SD	26 SD	27 SD	28 COL	29 COL
30 COL						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2 WAS	3 WAS	4 WAS	5 COL	6 COL
7 COL	8	9 DET	10 DET	11 PIT	12 PIT	13 PIT
14 PIT	15 NYM	16 NYM	17 NYM	18	19 SD	20 SD
21 SD	22 CWS	23 CWS	24 CWS	25 MIL	26 MIL	27 MIL
28 MIL	29 PIT	30 PIT	31 PIT			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 MIA	2 MIA	3 MIA
4 MIA	5	6 SD	7 SD	8 SD	9 MIL	10 MIL
11 MIL	12	13 DET	14 DET	15	16 PHI	17 PHI
18 PHI	19	20 COL	21 COL	22 COL	23 PHI	24 PHI
25 PHI	26 PHI	27 STL	28 STL	29 STL	30 COL	

July

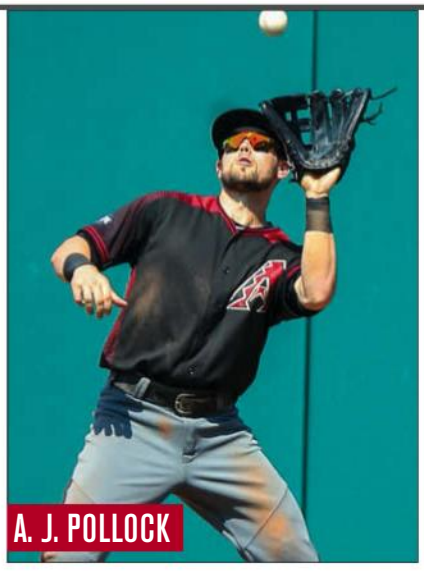
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 COL
2 COL	3	4 LAD	5 LAD	6 LAD	7 CIN	8 CIN
9 CIN	10	11	12	13	14 ATL	15 ATL
16 ATL	17	18 CIN	19 CIN	20 CIN	21 WAS	22 WAS
23 WAS	24 ATL	25 ATL	26 ATL	27 STL	28 STL	29 STL
30 STL	31					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 CHC	2 CHC	3 CHC	4 SF	5 SF
6 SF	7	8 LAD	9 LAD	10 LAD	11 CHC	12 CHC
13 CHC	14 HOU	15 HOU	16 HOU	17 HOU	18 MIN	19 MIN
20 MIN	21 NYM	22 NYM	23 NYM	24 NYM	25 SF	26 SF
27 SF	28	29 LAD	30 LAD	31 LAD		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 COL	2 COL
3 COL	4 LAD	5 LAD	6 LAD	7	8 SD	9 SD
10 SD	11 COL	12 COL	13 COL	14 COL	15 SF	16 SF
17 SF	18 SD	19 SD	20 SD	21	22 MIA	23 MIA
24 MIA	25 SF	26 SF	27 SF	28	29 KC	30 KC
1 KC						



ed Welington Castillo last year. Castillo was not offered a contract over the winter despite hitting 14 homers and throwing out 37.5 percent of potential basestealers.

BENCH Catcher Chris Herrmann was a valuable piece in his first NL season, setting career highs in virtually every offensive category and even taking a turn in center field before missing the second half of the season because of injuries. A left-handed counterpoint to Mathis, he is likely to play a lot. Versatile Chris Owings moved from the middle infield to center field when pressed into service there and set career highs in hits and stolen bases while at shortstop the final two months. Owings and newcomer Ketel Marte, acquired from Seattle with Walker for Segura, can play both sides of the infield, and both can steal some bases. Socrates Brito can defend at all three outfield spots and has occasional pop. Jeremy Hazelbaker, claimed off waivers from St. Louis, provides another left-handed bat capable of doing some damage.

MANAGEMENT After spending $206.5 million on Greinke and trading away Swanson last winter, management expected results. When that didn't happen, changes were made. New general manager Mike Hazen and new manager Torey Lovullo have résumés that include stops in Cleveland and most recently Boston, two organizations that are known for their forward thinking and reliance on analytics.

FINAL ANALYSIS The D-backs have the core of a strong offense with do-it-all Goldschmidt, power bats in Lamb and Tomas and speed/power guy Pollock, whose absence had a lot to do with the team's unexpected struggles a year ago. For the D-backs to have any kind of chance in the stacked NL West, however, their young starters behind Greinke will need to take another step forward, and Rodney must thrive as the closer.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

LETHAL LAMB You want a fast start? Third baseman Jake Lamb had 19 doubles, seven triples, 20 homers and 60 RBIs at the All-Star break, one of five players since 1933 to hit those numbers at that stage of the season. Hank Greenberg, Duke Snider, Dave Winfield and Vladimir Guerrero are the others. Lamb had a .983 OPS before the break and was the only one of the 42 qualifiers with an OPS of at least .960 in the last six seasons not to make the All-Star Game.

DAN THE MAN Dan Haren, who won 37 games in two-and-a-half seasons with the D-backs from 2008-10, was hired over the winter in the newly created position of "pitching strategist." Haren will work with the front office, the major-league coaching staff and analytics department in maximizing the staff's potential. Haren, whose Twitter handle is @ithrow88, also shared some advice: "Will also teach young pitchers how to tweet."

BARGAIN? New closer Fernando Rodney cost $2.75 million plus inventive bonuses, and he could be considered a steal when you compare his deal to those signed by Aroldis Chapman ($17.2 million average per year), Kenley Jansen ($16 million) and Mark Melancon ($15.5 million). The numbers over the last five years show it. Chapman — 181 saves, 1.84 ERA, 0.940 WHIP, 0.5 homers per nine innings; Jansen — 180 saves, 2.22 ERA, 0.860 WHIP, 0.7 homers; Melancon — 148, 2.39 ERA, 0.961 WHIP, 0.5 homers; Rodney — 174 saves, 2.92 ERA, 1.236 WHIP, 0.6 homers. Rodney also can earn $4 million in bonuses.

ON THE DEFENSIVE Despite a major preseason injury to All-Star A.J. Pollock, Arizona center fielders "saved" 12 runs, highest in the National League at the position, according to FanGraphs. Michael Bourn, Chris Owings, Mitch Haniger and Socrates Brito were the primary defenders there. Bourn started 65 games, most of any center fielder.

YOUTH IS SERVED The D-backs ended the 2016 season with the youngest team in the majors, according to Stats LLC. Their average age was 26 years, 313 days. They also finished 2015 as the majors' youngest, at 26 years, 341 days.

FRAMED Veteran catcher Jeff Mathis' signing over the winter is a sharp indicator of the front office's thought process as it regards defensive metrics behind the plate. Mathis, who signed a two-year, $4 million free-agent deal, has ranked in the NL top 15 in pitch-framing the last three years while with Miami, according to StatsCorner. Former D-backs starter Welington Castillo consistently ranked as one of the least effective at influencing umpires into called strikes, although his bat is quite a bit more productive than Mathis'.

Tom DiPace

DIAMONDBACKS ROSTER

General Manager: Mike Hazen **Manager:** Torey Lovullo **Coaches:** Mike Butcher (pitching), Mike Fetters (bullpen), Ron Gardenhire (bench), Robby Hammock (quality control/catching), Tim Laker (asst. hitting), Dave Magadan (hitting), Dave McKay (first base), Tony Perezchica (third base)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
	Anthony Banda	L-L	6-2	190	8/10/93	Reno (AAA)	4-4	3.67	13	13	0	73.2	73	27	68
						Mobile (AA)	6-2	2.12	13	13	0	76.1	70	28	84
33	Jake Barrett	R-R	6-2	240	7/22/91	**ARIZONA**	**1-2**	**3.49**	**68**	**0**	**4**	**59.1**	**47**	**28**	**56**
61	Silvino Bracho	R-R	5-10	190	7/17/92	**ARIZONA**	**0-2**	**7.30**	**26**	**0**	**0**	**24.2**	**31**	**10**	**17**
						Reno (AAA)	0-2	4.81	36	0	15	33.2	34	8	43
25	Archie Bradley	R-R	6-4	225	8/10/92	**ARIZONA**	**8-9**	**5.02**	**26**	**26**	**0**	**141.2**	**154**	**67**	**143**
						Reno (AAA)	5-1	1.99	7	7	0	40.2	26	18	47
36	Enrique Burgos	R-R	6-4	250	11/23/90	**ARIZONA**	**1-2**	**5.66**	**43**	**0**	**1**	**41.1**	**38**	**23**	**43**
						Reno (AAA)	3-0	1.95	24	0	1	27.2	23	17	29
40	Andrew Chafin	R-L	6-2	225	6/17/90	**ARIZONA**	**0-1**	**6.75**	**32**	**0**	**0**	**22.2**	**22**	**11**	**28**
						Reno (AAA)	1-1	1.93	7	1	0	9.1	6	2	8
						Visalia (A)	1-0	0.00	4	0	0	4.0	0	2	6
46	Patrick Corbin	L-L	6-3	210	7/19/89	**ARIZONA**	**5-13**	**5.15**	**36**	**24**	**1**	**155.2**	**177**	**66**	**131**
48	Randall Delgado	R-R	6-4	220	2/9/90	**ARIZONA**	**5-2**	**4.44**	**79**	**0**	**0**	**75.0**	**77**	**36**	**68**
52	Zack Godley	R-R	6-3	240	4/21/90	**ARIZONA**	**5-4**	**6.39**	**27**	**9**	**0**	**74.2**	**86**	**25**	**60**
						Reno (AAA)	2-1	3.31	7	6	0	32.2	37	15	38
						Mobile (AA)	2-5	3.83	8	8	0	49.1	48	11	31
21	Zack Greinke	R-R	6-2	200	10/21/83	**ARIZONA**	**13-7**	**4.37**	**26**	**26**	**0**	**158.2**	**161**	**41**	**134**
56	Steve Hathaway	L-L	6-1	185	9/13/90	**ARIZONA**	**0-0**	**4.91**	**24**	**0**	**0**	**14.2**	**18**	**6**	**15**
						Reno (AAA)	1-2	3.34	28	0	1	29.2	21	19	29
						Mobile (AA)	1-1	1.17	13	0	0	15.1	14	3	10
	Tyler Jones	R-R	6-4	240	9/5/89	Trenton (AA)	6-2	2.17	33	0	11	45.2	45	11	67
55	Matt Koch	L-R	6-3	215	11/2/90	**ARIZONA**	**1-1**	**2.00**	**7**	**2**	**1**	**18.0**	**9**	**4**	**10**
						Reno (AAA)	4-2	3.09	7	7	0	46.2	55	6	25
						Mobile (AA)	2-4	4.70	14	14	0	74.2	87	13	49
50	Evan Marshall	R-R	6-2	225	4/18/90	**ARIZONA**	**0-1**	**8.80**	**15**	**0**	**0**	**15.1**	**28**	**8**	**9**
						Reno (AAA)	1-1	4.59	33	0	0	33.1	36	16	28
26	Shelby Miller	R-R	6-3	225	10/10/90	**ARIZONA**	**3-12**	**6.15**	**20**	**20**	**0**	**101.0**	**127**	**42**	**70**
						Reno (AAA)	5-1	3.91	8	8	0	50.2	55	10	55
						Visalia (A)	2-0	0.75	2	2	0	12.0	8	1	19
38	Robbie Ray	L-L	6-2	195	10/1/91	**ARIZONA**	**8-15**	**4.90**	**32**	**32**	**0**	**174.1**	**185**	**71**	**218**
	Fernando Rodney	R-R	5-11	230	3/18/77	**SAN DIEGO**	**0-1**	**0.31**	**28**	**0**	**17**	**28.2**	**13**	**12**	**33**
						MIAMI	**2-3**	**5.89**	**39**	**0**	**8**	**36.2**	**41**	**25**	**41**
	Jimmie Sherfy	R-R	6-0	175	12/27/91	Reno (AAA)	1-4	6.17	24	0	12	23.1	20	13	27
						Mobile (AA)	2-0	0.46	16	0	10	19.2	6	5	31
						Visalia (A)	0-0	0.00	12	0	8	12.1	5	6	21
35	Braden Shipley	R-R	6-1	190	2/22/92	**ARIZONA**	**4-5**	**5.27**	**13**	**11**	**0**	**70.0**	**80**	**28**	**43**
						Reno (AAA)	8-5	3.70	19	19	0	119.1	131	22	77
99	Taijuan Walker	R-R	6-4	235	8/13/92	**SEATTLE**	**8-11**	**4.22**	**25**	**25**	**0**	**134.1**	**129**	**37**	**119**
						Tacoma (AAA)	1-0	3.60	3	3	0	15.0	12	8	6

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	Juan Graterol	R-R	6-1	205	2/14/89	**LOS ANGELES AL**	**.286**	**9**	**14**	**2**	**4**	**0**	**3**	**0**	**3**	**0**
						Salt Lake (AAA)	.300	68	227	24	68	2	23	10	27	2
28	Oscar Hernandez	R-R	6-1	230	7/9/93	**ARIZONA**	**.182**	**4**	**11**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**
						Mobile (AA)	.194	42	144	12	28	7	18	5	27	3
						Visalia (A)	.295	34	112	15	33	3	15	18	26	1
10	Chris Herrmann	L-R	6-0	200	11/24/87	**ARIZONA**	**.284**	**56**	**148**	**21**	**42**	**6**	**28**	**16**	**44**	**4**
						Reno (AAA)	.087	7	23	3	2	0	3	3	8	0
						AZL D-backs (R)	.417	4	12	2	5	0	0	1	1	0
	Jeff Mathis	R-R	6-0	205	3/31/83	**MIAMI**	**.238**	**41**	**126**	**12**	**30**	**2**	**15**	**4**	**36**	**0**

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
13	Nick Ahmed	R-R	6-2	195	3/15/90	**ARIZONA**	**.218**	**90**	**284**	**26**	**62**	**4**	**20**	**15**	**58**	**5**
27	Brandon Drury	R-R	6-2	210	8/21/92	**ARIZONA**	**.282**	**134**	**461**	**59**	**130**	**16**	**53**	**31**	**100**	**1**
44	Paul Goldschmidt	R-R	6-3	225	9/10/87	**ARIZONA**	**.297**	**158**	**579**	**106**	**172**	**24**	**95**	**110**	**150**	**32**
15	Phil Gosselin	R-R	6-1	200	10/3/88	**ARIZONA**	**.277**	**122**	**220**	**26**	**61**	**2**	**13**	**15**	**46**	**3**
22	Jake Lamb	L-R	6-3	215	10/9/90	**ARIZONA**	**.249**	**151**	**523**	**81**	**130**	**29**	**91**	**64**	**154**	**6**
	Domingo Leyba	S-R	5-11	160	9/11/95	Mobile (AA)	.301	44	156	21	47	4	20	17	22	4
						Visalia (A)	.294	86	340	48	100	6	40	29	62	5
	Dawel Lugo	R-R	6-0	190	12/31/94	Mobile (AA)	.306	48	173	24	53	4	20	4	15	1
						Visalia (A)	.314	79	315	61	99	13	42	15	41	2
	Ketel Marte	S-R	6-1	165	10/12/93	**SEATTLE**	**.259**	**119**	**437**	**55**	**113**	**1**	**33**	**18**	**84**	**11**
16	Chris Owings	R-R	5-10	185	8/12/91	**ARIZONA**	**.277**	**119**	**437**	**52**	**121**	**5**	**49**	**20**	**87**	**21**
	Jack Reinheimer	R-R	6-1	185	7/19/92	Reno (AAA)	.288	132	500	64	144	2	48	48	93	20
	Ildemaro Vargas	S-R	6-0	170	7/16/91	Reno (AAA)	.354	49	198	35	70	2	18	20	13	13
						Mobile (AA)	.276	83	323	41	89	4	19	24	24	8
						Visalia (A	.250	1	4	0	1	0	0	0	2	0

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
30	Socrates Brito	L-L	6-2	205	9/6/92	**ARIZONA**	**.179**	**40**	**95**	**10**	**17**	**4**	**12**	**2**	**23**	**2**
						Reno (AAA)	.294	73	303	46	89	6	39	13	60	7
	Jeremy Hazelbaker	L-R	6-3	190	8/14/87	**ST. LOUIS**	**.235**	**114**	**200**	**35**	**47**	**12**	**28**	**18**	**64**	**5**
						Memphis (AAA)	.325	13	40	8	13	1	11	6	12	2
6	David Peralta	L-L	6-1	210	8/14/87	**ARIZONA**	**.251**	**48**	**171**	**23**	**43**	**4**	**15**	**8**	**42**	**2**
11	A.J. Pollock	R-R	6-1	195	12/5/87	**ARIZONA**	**.244**	**12**	**41**	**9**	**10**	**2**	**4**	**5**	**8**	**4**
						Reno (AAA)	.444	4	18	6	8	1	8	2	1	1
						Visalia (A)	.438	6	16	3	7	2	4	4	1	1
						AZL D-backs (R)	.333	2	6	2	2	0	0	1	0	0
24	Yasmany Tomas	R-R	6-2	250	11/14/90	**ARIZONA**	**.272**	**140**	**530**	**72**	**144**	**31**	**83**	**31**	**136**	**2**

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

ANFERNEE GRIER, OF

Grier has a toolsy package, and his combination of above-average power and above-average speed was enough to convince the D-backs to take him as a sandwich pick, No. 39 overall. The D-backs lost their first-round pick after signing free-agent Zack Greinke the winter before. Grier had a strong junior year at Auburn, hitting .366 with 12 homers, 41 RBIs and 19 stolen bases in 56 games. He profiles as a center fielder but played only 24 minor-league games — 19 as a designated hitter — after signing for a $1.5 million bonus last summer. Grier's father, Antron, was a sixth-round draft choice of St. Louis in 1987 and played four years in the minors, so Anfernee knows the process. He needs at-bats and is several years away, but he has the potential to make an impact in the major leagues as a center fielder.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Braden Shipley, RHP (25) Shipley, who commands four pitches, showed flashes of brilliance in his first trip to the majors.

2. Anthony Banda, LHP (23) Banda, acquired in a package for Gerardo Parra in 2014, continued his ascent by going 10–6 with a 2.88 ERA at two levels a year ago.

3. Socrates Brito, OF (24) Brito has played brief parts of two seasons in the majors. With his speed, arm and above-average defense, he profiles as a center fielder.

4. Taylor Clarke, RHP (23) Two years removed from Tommy John surgery, Clarke features a mid-90s fastball and had immediate success as a Double-A starter.

5. Anfernee Grier, OF (21) Grier found tough sledding against more polished pitching when Auburn entered SEC play last spring, but his combination of athleticism and projectable power are top selling points.

6. Dawel Lugo, 3B (22) Lugo has good power potential and has a strong arm. He had 17 homers in Class A and AA stops last year.

7. Jon Duplantier, RHP (22) Duplantier touches the mid-90s and has a swing-and-miss curveball.

8. Domingo Leyba 2B/SS (21) Leyba showed improved plate discipline in 2016. He plays shortstop but profiles more at second.

9. Alex Young, LHP (23) Young pitched well in the Midwest League but was susceptible to the long ball after a promotion to the Cal League last year, his second season after being a 2015 second-round pick.

10. Oscar Hernandez, C (23) Hernandez brought big-league catching and strike-frame skills when he was selected from Tampa Bay in the 2014 Rule 5 Draft. His bat remains a work in progress.

COLORADO ROCKIES

2017 PREDICTION
3rd
NL West

2016 RECORD
75-87

HOME: 42-39 **ROAD:** 33-48

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

TEAM INFO

COORS FIELD
Opened: 1995 **Capacity:** 50,445
Left: 347' **Center:** 415' **Right:** 350'
Tickets: 303-ROCKIES
colorado.rockies.mlb.com

➤ FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
3B Nolan Arenado

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
RHP Jon Gray

BULL MARKET
OF David Dahl

BEAR MARKET
RHP Chad Bettis

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
RHP Chad Bettis

IPO C Tom Murphy

FUTURES MARKET IF Brendan Rodgers

INSIDER TIP In addition to the better-known Dahl, Murphy is a firm "buy." He's dripping with power, and the ballpark will keep his batting averages above kill-your-category depths.

➤ STATLINE

GREATEST ROAD/HOME WIN PERCENTAGE DIFFERENTIAL, 1993-2016

1. Rockies	**-.151**
2. Pirates	-.102
3. Brewers	-.100
4. Nationals	-.094
5t. Astros	-.090
5t. Cardinals	-.090

Tom DiPace

The Rockies are in a win-now mode, a bold organizational mindset considering the recent past. They have endured a franchise-record-tying six straight losing seasons and have averaged 92 losses a year during that dismal stretch. After a seven-game improvement to 75 wins in 2016, the Rockies aren't merely eyeing a similar increase. They are aiming for a bigger leap that would vault them into contention under new manager Bud Black, who will bring a pitcher's perspective to managing at Coors Field.

The reasons for the Rockies' optimism go far beyond Black. They addressed glaring needs by signing free agents Ian Desmond to play first base and Mike Dunn to improve the bullpen. Desmond will strengthen an already potent lineup that includes a host of productive players in their primes. As usual, though, pitching will determine their fate.

ROTATION Jon Gray, Chad Bettis, lefthander Tyler Anderson and Tyler Chatwood went a combined 41–33 last year on a sub-.500 team and are expected to comprise the heart of the rotation. Gray has a mid-90s fastball, a wipeout slider, a good changeup and a curveball that became a weapon in the second half of last season. Bettis is recovering from surgery in late November for testicular cancer but is expected to be ready for spring training. He'll be trying to build on a season in which he set career highs for wins (14), innings (186), starts (32) and strikeouts (138). Anderson, who made his major-league debut in June, has poise beyond his years and a low-90s fastball made more effective by an outstanding changeup. Anderson averaged just 2.2 walks per nine innings. Chatwood's command can be spotty, but he has a knack for getting ground balls and is a solid back-of-the-rotation starter. Jeff Hoffman and German Marquez are candidates for the final spot after making their big-league debuts last year.

BULLPEN The Rockies relievers had a major-league worst 5.13 ERA last year and blew 28 saves. Improving the bullpen was a pressing need and why the Rockies signed Dunn to a three-year, $19 million contract, the largest the they have ever given a reliever. He has averaged 10 strikeouts per nine innings in his career and has been a reliable setup man. Dunn will likely pitch in the seventh and eighth innings but could emerge as the closer. Other contenders for that role are Adam Ottavino, the closer when 2016 ended, lefthander Jake McGee and possibly Carlos Estevez. The bullpen could get an early season lift with the return of Jairo Diaz, a hard thrower who underwent Tommy John surgery in March 2016. Veterans Jason Motte and Chad Qualls joined the Rockies last year and were huge disappointments. If both weren't in the final year of their contracts — Motte at $5 million and Qualls at $3.25 million — they would be gone. If they're even average this year, it will upgrade the bullpen over last year. Lefthander Chris Rusin and — to a lesser degree — Jordan Lyles are effective long relievers.

MIDDLE INFIELD Second baseman DJ LeMahieu, the reigning National League batting champion, has quietly turned into a complete player. He has won a Gold Glove and along with shortstop Trevor Story gives the Rockies superb defense up the middle. Story showed remarkable poise, confidence and presence during a memorable rookie season when he established himself as a franchise cornerstone. Story led all MLB rookies with 27 homers and tied for the lead with 72 RBIs despite being limited to 97 games by a season-ending thumb injury in late July.

CORNERS Third baseman Nolan Arenado is one of the elite players in the game. He is a perennial Gold Glove winner whose defense produces jaw-dropping highlights daily. Arenado is the first NL player to lead the league in home runs (he has tied for the NL lead in each of the last two years) and RBIs in consecutive seasons since Hall of Fame third baseman Mike Schmidt. Desmond has never played first base, but after he made the switch last year from shortstop to left field and then center field, the Rockies are confident he will make a smooth transition to yet another new position. He strikes out frequently but should produce 30 doubles, 25 homers and 20 stolen bases.

OUTFIELD This is a very strong group, albeit one in which the three starters and primary reserve all bat left-handed. Center fielder Charlie Blackmon provides unusual power from the leadoff spot and had an average of .324 and a .933 OPS. David Dahl is a true center fielder but will play left field because of Blackmon's presence. Dahl plays with a confidence and composure that is rare for an inexperienced major leaguer. Healthy for the second straight season, right fielder Carlos Gonzalez played 150 games and was very productive, hitting at least 25 home runs for the fifth time with the Rockies and driving in 100 runs for the first time since 2010.

CATCHING With free agent Nick Hundley gone, the Rockies will rely on Tom Murphy and Tony Wolters. The latter was claimed on waivers from Cleveland in spring training

➤ PROJECTED LINEUP

NEXT LEVEL

LINEUP

CF	Charlie Blackmon (L)
2B	**DJ LeMahieu (R)**
3B	Nolan Arenado (R)
RF	Carlos Gonzalez (L)
SS	Trevor Story (R)
1B	Ian Desmond (R)
LF	David Dahl (L)
C	Tom Murphy (R)

BENCH

C	Tony Wolters (L)
INF	Cristhian Adames (S)
OF/1B	**Gerardo Parra (L)**
UT	Alexi Amarista (L)

ROTATION

RHP	**Jon Gray**
RHP	Chad Bettis
LHP	Tyler Anderson
RHP	Tyler Chatwood
RHP	Jeff Hoffman

BULLPEN

RHP	Adam Ottavino (Closer)
LHP	Mike Dunn
LHP	Jake McGee
RHP	**Carlos Estevez**
RHP	Jason Motte
RHP	Chad Qualls
RHP	Jordan Lyles
LHP	Chris Rusin

DJ LeMahieu led baseball with a .348 batting average, in part because of a league-high .388 BABIP. Since his debut in 2011, LeMahieu has a .352 BABIP, ninth best during that stretch among qualified hitters.

Gerardo Parra had a .271 OBP due to declines in contact rate (83.0 to 80.2 percent) and walk rate (4.8 to 2.4) and an increase in strikeout rate (15.6 to 19.2).

Jon Gray was one of three qualified starters whose FIP (3.60) was a full run lower than his ERA (4.61). That largely had to do with his 26.0 percent strikeout rate, which was 11th in baseball.

Carlos Estevez struggled in his rookie campaign in part because he had a 68.4 percent strand rate, which ranked 10th lowest among qualified relievers.

➤ SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE ROCKIES

"They're better than they've been in a long time. The pitching looks good enough, although it's on the thin side, so they can't afford an injury. But Jon Gray's a horse, Tyler Anderson's funky enough to be O.K., Jeff Hoffman has a high ceiling, and Chad Bettis and Tyler Chatwood are serviceable. They've got a lot of good arms in the bullpen, too, and the deals for Mike Dunn and Ian Desmond show that they're serious about winning now. Desmond's a top-quality makeup guy, a winner, and he'll fit wherever he plays. His numbers jumped up in Texas last year, and they'll go way up at Coors Field. These guys are good enough to hit anywhere, though. Trevor Story knows how to put the ball in the air, and his power stands out at shortstop, even though he looks more like a third baseman. That's Nolan Arenado's spot, and he's just amazing."

➤ STATISTICIAN

5.13 The Rockies' bullpen ERA in 2016, the highest since 2004 and sixth highest in franchise history.

.379 Career average for Ian Desmond at Coors Field, where he is 36-for-95 with three homers, 18 RBIs and a 1.016 OPS.

845 Runs scored by the Rockies in 2015, the most since 2007, when they scored 860 runs and went to the World Series.

.348 National League-leading average by DJ LeMahieu, the ninth-highest single-season average in franchise history and highest since Todd Helton hit .358 in 2003.

10 Leadoff home runs in 2016 by Charlie Blackmon, who became the fifth player in MLB history and first since 2007 to hit 10 or more leadoff homers in a season.

17 Length of the hitting streak by David Dahl to start his career, tying the MLB record for the longest hitting streak to start a career set by Cincinnati's Chuck Aleno in 1941.

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3 MIL	4 MIL	5 MIL	6 MIL	7 LAD	8 LAD
9 LAD	10 SD	11 SD	12 SD	13 SF	14 SF	15 SF
16 SF	17	18 LAD	19 LAD	20	21 SF	22 SF
23 SF	24 WAS	25 WAS	26 WAS	27 WAS	28 ARI	29 ARI
30 ARI						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2 SD	3 SD	4 SD	5 ARI	6 ARI
7 ARI	8 CHC	9 CHC	10 CHC	11 LAD	12 LAD	13 LAD
14 LAD	15	16 MIN	17 MIN	18 MIN	19 CIN	20 CIN
21 CIN	22 PHI	23 PHI	24 PHI	25 PHI	26 STL	27 STL
28 STL	29 SEA	30 SEA	31 SEA			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 SEA	2 SD	3 SD
4 SD	5	6 CLE	7 CLE	8 CHC	9 CHC	10 CHC
11 CHC	12 PIT	13 PIT	14 PIT	15 SF	16 SF	17 SF
18 SF	19	20 ARI	21 ARI	22 ARI	23 LAD	24 LAD
25 LAD	26 SF	27 SF	28 SF	29	30 ARI	

July

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 ARI
2 ARI	3 CIN	4 CIN	5 CIN	6 CIN	7 CWS	8 CWS
9 CWS	10	11	12	13	14 NYM	15 NYM
16 NYM	17 SD	18 SD	19 SD	20	21 PIT	22 PIT
23 PIT	24 STL	25 STL	26 STL	27	28 WAS	29 WAS
30 WAS	31					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 NYM	2 NYM	3 NYM	4 PHI	5 PHI
6 PHI	7	8 CLE	9 CLE	10	11 MIA	12 MIA
13 MIA	14 ATL	15 ATL	16 ATL	17 ATL	18 MIL	19 MIL
20 MIL	21	22 KC	23 KC	24 KC	25 ATL	26 ATL
27 ATL	28 DET	29 DET	30 DET	31		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 ARI	2 ARI
3 ARI	4 SF	5 SF	6 SF	7 LAD	8 LAD	9 LAD
10 LAD	11 ARI	12 ARI	13 ARI	14 ARI	15 SD	16 SD
17 SD	18	19 SF	20 SF	21 SD	22 SD	23 SD
24 SD	25 MIA	26 MIA	27 MIA	28	29 LAD	30 LAD
1 LAD						

DJ LEMAHIEU

last year and served as Hundley's backup. Wolters is an exceptional receiver with fluid moves behind the plate, a strong arm and soft hands that enable him to frame pitches well. His offense improved during his rookie season, and in the second half he hit .321 with an .862 OPS. Murphy, who has played with the Rockies toward the end of the past two seasons, has exceptional power and above-average arm strength.

BENCH When Wolters catches, Murphy, a right-handed hitter, gives the Rockies a power-hitting threat off the bench that they otherwise lack. The left-handed-hitting Wolters is extremely versatile. He began his career as a middle infielder and has shown he can play shortstop and second base when needed, a huge plus late in games. Gerardo Parra became a fourth outfielder last year with the emergence of Dahl and began playing first base to increase his value. He's much better in the outfield but gives the Rockies a left-handed-hitting alternative at first to Desmond. Alexi Amarista can play three infield positions and has extensive outfield experience and enough speed to play center field and come off the bench and run.

MANAGEMENT General manager Jeff Bridich inherited manager Walt Weiss, who was at the Rockies' helm four seasons. They were together for two seasons but never forged a good working relationship. With his contract concluded and his firing imminent, Weiss resigned after the 2016 season ended. Hiring the experienced Black was a coup for Bridich. He and Black communicate often and well. Owner Dick Monfort has given Bridich authority to make major moves.

FINAL ANALYSIS Being in contention is realistic if the young rotation continues to improve and the bullpen, unlike last year, becomes an asset. And the bullpen should be better with the addition of Dunn and the return of Diaz as well as young pitching prospects like Hoffman, Marquez and Kyle Freeland, who could be moved temporarily to the bullpen to fortify that area.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

GOLDEN NOLAN Nolan Arenado is the first third baseman in major-league history and the first National Leaguer at any position to win a Gold Glove Award in his first four seasons in the majors. He's the first third baseman to win four straight Gold Gloves since Scott Rolen won five in succession from 2000-04, and Arenado joined outfielder Ichiro Suzuki as the only players to win a Gold Glove in each of their first four seasons. Ichiro's run of successive Gold Gloves lasted 10 years, all with the Mariners. Arenado is also the first player in Rockies history to win four straight Gold Gloves. Right fielder Larry Walker won three straight from 1997-99.

POSTPONED PICK The Rockies were scheduled to pick 11th in the 2017 draft but lost that pick by signing free agent Ian Desmond. Their first selection will be No. 48 overall, the latest initial pick in franchise history.

VENTURING OUT The Rockies went 33–48 on the road in 2016, their best road record since 2011 (35–46). They have had a winning road record only once in their 24 seasons — 41–40 in 2009.

ROAD WARRIOR Center fielder Charlie Blackmon hit .324 with 29 home runs, a .381 on-base percentage and a .933 OPS — all career highs. And Blackmon's big season wasn't due to skewed splits at home and on the road. Indeed, at Coors Field, Blackmon hit .335 with 12 homers, 47 RBIs, a .399 OBP and a .939 OPS. On the road, Blackmon hit .313 with 17 homers, 35 RBIs, a .363 OBP and .926 OPS.

LATE SLIDE A 14–5 surge coming out of the All-Star break lifted the Rockies' record to 54–53 on Aug. 3. But that was four days after shortstop Trevor Story suffered a season-ending thumb injury. His absence and struggles by the bullpen were the main reasons the Rockies went 21–34 after Aug. 3. After July 30, the Rockies went 6–20 on the road with one series win. And the bullpen's woes resulted in demoralizing late losses, leading to the Rockies' 12–20 record in one-run games — the fewest wins by any major-league team in such contests.

UNFRIENDLY CONFINES Tyler Chatwood went 8–1 with a 1.69 ERA in 13 starts on the road in 2016 and limited opponents to a .190 average. He led the majors in road ERA and set a franchise record. Chatwood also recorded a club-record 27.2 innings road scoreless streak. But Chatwood went 4–8 with a 6.12 ERA in 14 starts at Coors Field, where opponents batted .303 against him.

Tom DiPace

ROCKIES ROSTER

General Manager: Jeff Bridich **Manager:** Bud Black **Coaches:** Stu Cole (third base), Tony Diaz (first base), Duane Espy (hitting), Steve Foster (pitching), Ronnie Gideon, Darren Holmes (bullpen), Mike Redmond (bench), Jeff Salazar (asst. hitting)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
	Yency Almonte	S-R	6-3	205	6/4/94	Hartford (AA)	3-1	3.00	5	5	0	30.0	22	16	22
						Modesto (A)	8-9	3.71	22	22	0	138.1	124	39	134
44	Tyler Anderson	L-L	6-4	210	12/30/89	**COLORADO**	**5-6**	**3.54**	**19**	**19**	**0**	**114.1**	**119**	**28**	**99**
						Albuquerque (AAA)	1-1	2.12	3	3	0	17.0	15	6	13
						Hartford (AA)	1-1	1.80	2	2	0	10.0	6	2	11
						Modesto (A)	0-0	4.91	1	1	0	3.2	2	5	6
35	Chad Bettis	R-R	6-1	200	4/26/89	**COLORADO**	**14-8**	**4.79**	**32**	**32**	**0**	**186.0**	**204**	**59**	**138**
31	Eddie Butler	R-R	6-2	180	3/13/91	**COLORADO**	**2-5**	**7.17**	**17**	**9**	**0**	**64.0**	**87**	**21**	**47**
						Albuquerque (AAA)	8-3	4.45	15	15	0	89.0	93	26	35
	Matt Carasiti	R-R	6-3	205	7/23/91	**COLORADO**	**1-0**	**9.19**	**19**	**0**	**0**	**15.2**	**25**	**11**	**17**
						Albuquerque (AAA)	0-0	0.00	6	0	2	7.0	2	2	5
						Hartford (AA)	0-2	2.31	38	0	29	39.0	28	7	43
	Shane Carle	R-R	6-4	185	8/30/91	Albuquerque (AAA)	5-8	5.42	27	19	0	111.1	147	32	88
46	Miguel Castro	R-R	6-5	190	12/24/94	**COLORADO**	**0-0**	**6.14**	**19**	**0**	**0**	**14.2**	**18**	**5**	**12**
						Albuquerque (AAA)	2-3	10.34	16	0	0	15.2	21	7	15
32	Tyler Chatwood	R-R	6-0	185	12/16/89	**COLORADO**	**12-9**	**3.87**	**27**	**27**	**0**	**158.0**	**147**	**70**	**117**
47	Jairo Diaz	R-R	6-0	200	5/27/91	Injured — Missed Season									
	Mike Dunn	L-L	6-0	215	5/23/85	**MIAMI**	**6-1**	**3.40**	**51**	**0**	**0**	**42.1**	**43**	**11**	**38**
						Jupiter (A)	0-0	0.00	3	2	0	3.0	2	0	5
54	Carlos Estevez	R-R	6-4	210	12/28/92	**COLORADO**	**3-7**	**5.24**	**63**	**0**	**11**	**55.0**	**50**	**28**	**59**
						Albuquerque (AAA)	1-0	3.18	5	0	0	5.2	6	3	4
	Rayan Gonzalez	R-R	6-3	175	10/18/90	Hartford (AA)	2-2	3.12	46	0	1	52.0	44	23	49
55	Jon Gray	R-R	6-4	235	11/5/91	**COLORADO**	**10-10**	**4.61**	**29**	**29**	**0**	**168.0**	**153**	**59**	**185**
						Modesto (A)	0-1	2.08	2	2	0	8.2	8	3	11
34	Jeff Hoffman	R-R	6-5	225	1/8/93	**COLORADO**	**0-4**	**4.88**	**8**	**6**	**0**	**31.1**	**37**	**17**	**22**
						Albuquerque (AAA)	6-9	4.02	22	22	0	118.2	117	44	124
	Zach Jemiola	L-R	6-3	200	4/6/94	Hartford (AA)	8-10	4.39	27	27	0	162.0	186	46	92
24	Jordan Lyles	R-R	6-4	230	10/19/90	**COLORADO**	**4-5**	**5.83**	**40**	**5**	**1**	**58.2**	**69**	**28**	**32**
						Albuquerque (AAA)	4-2	5.44	8	8	0	44.2	57	18	29
67	German Marquez	R-R	6-1	185	2/22/95	**COLORADO**	**1-1**	**5.23**	**6**	**3**	**0**	**20.2**	**28**	**6**	**15**
						Albuquerque (AAA)	2-0	4.35	5	5	0	31.0	30	6	29
						Hartford (AA)	9-6	2.85	21	21	0	135.2	124	33	126
51	Jake McGee	L-L	6-3	230	8/6/86	**COLORADO**	**2-3**	**4.73**	**57**	**0**	**15**	**45.2**	**56**	**16**	**38**
						Modesto (A)	1-0	0.00	2	0	0	2.0	0	0	2
	Sam Moll	L-L	5-10	185	1/3/92	Albuquerque (AAA)	3-5	4.94	42	0	2	47.1	55	19	39
						Grand Junction (R)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	2.0	0	0	5
30	Jason Motte	R-R	6-0	205	6/22/82	**COLORADO**	**0-1**	**4.94**	**30**	**0**	**0**	**23.2**	**28**	**8**	**24**
						Albuquerque (AAA)	0-0	3.18	6	0	0	5.2	3	3	5
45	Scott Oberg	R-R	6-2	205	3/13/90	**COLORADO**	**1-1**	**5.19**	**24**	**0**	**1**	**26.0**	**26**	**11**	**20**
						Albuquerque (AAA)	1-0	2.43	27	0	9	29.2	16	11	36
0	Adam Ottavino	S-R	6-5	220	11/22/85	**COLORADO**	**1-3**	**2.67**	**34**	**0**	**7**	**27.0**	**18**	**7**	**35**
						Albuquerque (AAA)	0-1	4.76	6	0	0	5.2	2	3	6
						Modesto (A)	0-0	6.75	4	0	1	2.2	6	2	6
50	Chad Qualls	R-R	6-4	235	8/17/78	**COLORADO**	**2-0**	**5.23**	**44**	**0**	**0**	**32.2**	**43**	**9**	**22**
						Albuquerque (AAA)	0-0	21.60	2	0	0	1.2	4	1	2
52	Chris Rusin	L-L	6-2	195	10/22/86	**COLORADO**	**3-5**	**3.74**	**29**	**7**	**0**	**84.1**	**82**	**23**	**69**
						Albuquerque (AAA)	0-1	5.79	3	3	0	9.1	13	3	11
71	Antonio Senzatela	R-R	6-1	180	1/21/95	Hartford (AA)	4-1	1.82	7	7	0	34.2	27	9	27

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
13	Dustin Garneau	R-R	6-0	200	8/13/87	**COLORADO**	**.235**	**24**	**68**	**7**	**16**	**1**	**6**	**6**	**22**	**0**
						Albuquerque (AAA)	.292	52	185	31	54	15	35	16	43	2
23	Tom Murphy	R-R	6-1	220	4/3/91	**COLORADO**	**.273**	**21**	**44**	**8**	**12**	**5**	**13**	**4**	**19**	**1**
						Albuquerque (AAA)	.327	80	303	53	99	19	59	16	78	1
14	Tony Wolters	L-R	5-10	200	6/9/92	**COLORADO**	**.259**	**71**	**205**	**27**	**53**	**3**	**30**	**21**	**53**	**4**
						Albuquerque (AAA)	.250	2	8	1	2	0	1	0	1	0

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
18	Cristhian Adames	S-R	6-0	185	7/26/91	**COLORADO**	**.218**	**121**	**225**	**25**	**49**	**2**	**17**	**24**	**47**	**2**
	Alexi Amarista	L-R	5-6	160	4/6/89	**SAN DIEGO**	**.257**	**65**	**140**	**9**	**36**	**0**	**11**	**8**	**26**	**9**
						El Paso (AAA)	.333	13	48	9	16	1	4	4	8	1
28	Nolan Arenado	R-R	6-2	205	4/16/91	**COLORADO**	**.294**	**160**	**618**	**116**	**182**	**41**	**133**	**68**	**103**	**2**
20	Ian Desmond	R-R	6-3	215	9/20/85	**TEXAS**	**.285**	**156**	**625**	**107**	**178**	**22**	**86**	**44**	**160**	**21**
9	DJ LeMahieu	R-R	6-4	215	7/13/88	**COLORADO**	**.348**	**146**	**552**	**104**	**192**	**11**	**66**	**66**	**80**	**11**
27	Trevor Story	R-R	6-1	180	11/15/92	**COLORADO**	**.272**	**97**	**372**	**67**	**101**	**27**	**72**	**35**	**130**	**8**
74	Pat Valaika	R-R	5-11	200	9/9/92	**COLORADO**	**.263**	**13**	**19**	**3**	**5**	**1**	**2**	**0**	**8**	**0**
						Albuquerque (AAA)	.209	28	110	8	23	1	13	2	28	2
						Hartford (AA)	.269	108	431	66	116	13	67	28	95	8

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
19	Charlie Blackmon	L-L	6-3	210	7/1/86	**COLORADO**	**.324**	**143**	**578**	**111**	**187**	**29**	**82**	**43**	**102**	**17**
						Modesto (A)	.125	2	8	1	1	0	0	0	1	0
26	David Dahl	L-R	6-2	195	4/1/94	**COLORADO**	**.315**	**63**	**222**	**42**	**70**	**7**	**24**	**15**	**59**	**5**
						Albuquerque (AAA)	.484	16	62	17	30	5	16	6	11	1
						Hartford (AA)	.278	76	288	53	80	13	45	39	85	16
5	Carlos Gonzalez	L-L	6-1	220	10/17/85	**COLORADO**	**.298**	**150**	**584**	**87**	**174**	**25**	**100**	**46**	**129**	**2**
8	Gerardo Parra	L-L	5-11	210	5/6/87	**COLORADO**	**.253**	**102**	**368**	**45**	**93**	**7**	**39**	**9**	**73**	**6**
						Albuquerque (AAA)	.150	5	20	2	3	0	3	0	5	0
						Hartford (AA)	.333	2	6	1	2	0	0	1	2	0
72	Jordan Patterson	L-L	6-4	215	2/12/92	**COLORADO**	**.444**	**10**	**18**	**1**	**8**	**0**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**0**
						Albuquerque (AAA)	.293	119	427	75	125	14	61	47	118	10
68	Raimel Tapia	L-L	6-2	160	2/4/94	**COLORADO**	**.263**	**22**	**38**	**4**	**10**	**0**	**3**	**2**	**11**	**3**
						Albuquerque (AAA)	.346	24	104	14	36	0	14	2	12	6
						Hartford (AA)	.323	104	424	79	137	8	34	25	49	17

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

RILEY PINT, RHP

With the fourth overall pick, the Rockies selected Pint out of St. Thomas Aquinas (Kan.) High School and signed him for $4.8 million, the second-highest bonus in franchise history. Pint has a power arm with an electric fastball and a huge upside. Not surprisingly, Pint, who turned 19 in September and was the second-youngest pitcher to qualify for the Rookie-level Pioneer League ERA title, was inconsistent in his pro debut, going 1–5 with a 5.35 ERA, 23 walks and 35 strikeouts in 36 innings over 11 starts. Pint's fastball ranges from 93-97 mph and has hit 102 mph. His power curveball is 80-83 mph and a plus pitch. Against high school hitters, Pint didn't need his changeup, but it has become reliable and effective. Since signing, Pint has made big strides with minor adjustments to his delivery to make it more repeatable.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Brendan Rodgers, SS/2B (20) As a teenager, hit .281 with 19 homers and 73 RBIs in South Atlantic League.

2. Riley Pint, RHP (19) To prepare for his first spring training, Pint, the fourth overall pick in the 2016 draft, spent the offseason working out at the Rockies' Arizona complex.

3. Jeff Hoffman, RHP (24) Broke into the big leagues last year, his first with the Rockies. Has a mid-90s fastball, sharp curve and an improving changeup.

4. Raimel Tapia, OF (23) Exceptional hand-eye coordination has enabled him to barrel up pitches regardless of location and hit .317 over six seasons in the minors.

5. German Marquez, RHP (22) Was named Eastern League Pitcher of the Year, leading in innings (135.2) and strikeouts (126) and finishing second in ERA (2.85).

6. Ryan McMahon, 3B/1B (22) Must reduce strikeouts, but bat speed and loft in swing give him plus power.

7. Kyle Freeland, LHP (23) Fastball and slider are plus pitches for the Rockies' 2014 first-round pick. He's a consistent strike thrower with a low walk rate.

8. Antonio Senzatela, RHP (22) Has recovered from shoulder inflammation that limited him to seven starts last year at Double-A. Has good downhill angle with mid-90s fastball and pitches inside fearlessly.

9. Tom Murphy, C (26) Has well-above-average raw power as shown by eight homers in 79 at-bats with Rockies the past two seasons.

10. Ryan Castellani, RHP (21) Has an exceptional sinker that sat in the 92-95 mph range last year in the California League, up from 90-93 mph in his first two professional seasons.

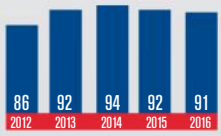
LOS ANGELES DODGERS

2017 PREDICTION
1st
NL West

2016 RECORD
91-71

HOME: 53-28 **ROAD:** 38-43

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND



TEAM INFO

DODGER STADIUM
Opened: 1962 **Capacity:** 56,000
Left: 330' **Center:** 400' **Right:** 330'
Tickets: 866-DODGERS
losangeles.dodgers.mlb

➤ FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
SS Corey Seager

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
LHP Clayton Kershaw

BULL MARKET
OF Andrew Toles

BEAR MARKET
LHP Scott Kazmir

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
RHP Hyun-Jin Ryu

IPO RHP Jose De Leon

FUTURES MARKET 1B Cody Bellinger

INSIDER TIP There are useful players in the Dodgers outfield, but they're all mix-and-match, with none likely to garner more than 450 or so at-bats.

➤ STATLINE

HRs AS SHORTSTOP: LEFT-HANDED HITTER

1. Corey Seager, 2016	**26**
2. Dick McAuliffe, 1964	24
3t. Brandon Crawford, 2015	21
3t. Stephen Drew, 2008	21
5t. Didi Gregorius, 2016	19
5t. Brad Miller, 2016	19

The Los Angeles Dodgers have pulled off an impressive balancing act over the past four years. While continuing to dominate the National League West (four consecutive division titles) and making the NL Championship Series twice, they have transitioned on the field, in the dugout and in the front office, where the Andrew Friedman-led group has pushed the envelope on sophisticated analytical approaches. The deep pockets of ownership have allowed the Dodgers to swallow millions in dead money to rid themselves of players for whom they had no use (Carl Crawford and Alex Guerrero being the latest) while spending millions more to add prospects to the farm system. That system might be the deepest in baseball, and it produced the franchise's 17th NL Rookie of the Year in Corey Seager last season — not to mention enough talent to absorb a record 28 players going on the disabled list in 2016. The infusion of young talent is expected to continue in 2017 with precocious pitching talent Julio Urias just the most prominent name.

Most franchises would have to take a step back to pull off such a transition. The Dodgers have done it while remaining one of the reigning powers out West.

ROTATION Disaster struck the Dodgers' starting rotation last season — they lost ace Clayton Kershaw for 10 weeks due to a mildly herniated disc in his back. Kershaw returned in time to lead the Dodgers' playoff run and assured everyone in the offseason that his back issues would not affect him in 2017. He will lead a deep rotation, with fellow lefthander Rich Hill re-signed to provide a legitimate No. 2 starter. Hill's durability is in question, however, and health issues abound with the other veteran starters — Brandon McCarthy, Scott Kazmir and Hyun-Jin Ryu. Kenta Maeda and Alex Wood provide better options, and a cadre of young starting options led by Urias will push for inclusion. The Dodgers used a major-league-high 16 different starters in 2015 and 15 in 2016 — and they have the depth to do it again.

BULLPEN Kenley Jansen had the best season of his career in 2016, firmly establishing himself as one of baseball's elite closers with 47 saves, a 0.67 WHIP (lowest among any player who pitched over 60 innings) and becoming the Dodgers' all-time franchise leader in saves. And then the Dodgers almost lost him. Jansen hit the free-agent market in the fall and received bigger offers from the Washington Nationals and Miami Marlins. But Jansen didn't want to leave L.A. His return prevented the Dodgers from sprouting a major leak in their bullpen. The relief corps around Jansen will have to be rebuilt, but the Dodgers believe they have some strong options — particularly lefthander Grant Dayton and righthanders Josh Fields and Pedro Baez.

MIDDLE INFIELD The Dodgers had high hopes that Corey Seager would some day be their best player. That day arrived by the end of May. The National League Rookie of the Year led NL shortstops in batting average, slugging, OPS, runs, total bases and hits. He is the leading man in the Dodgers' transition to a team built around younger talent. Veteran second baseman Chase Utley was valuable as a mentor to Seager and in changing the clubhouse culture. But the Dodgers targeted second as a spot where they could upgrade their hitting against left-handed pitching (a major deficiency in 2016). Enrique Hernandez is a potential stopgap at the position.

CORNERS The Dodgers have spent over $750 million on player salaries over the past three seasons. But one of the best investments they made during that time was the $1 million contract they gave to Justin Turner to compete for a bench role in spring 2014. Turner has emerged as one of the most productive hitters in the National League, a Gold Glove finalist at third base and, more recent, a key leadership force in the Dodgers' clubhouse. He bounced back from knee surgery a year ago to hit .275 with career highs in home runs (27) and RBIs (90) while posting a third consecutive OPS well over .800. Across the diamond, Adrian Gonzalez remains a remarkably consistent piece of the Dodgers' core — although at age 34 there are signs of a drop-off. His .784 OPS last year was his lowest for a full season.

OUTFIELD The Dodgers finally ran out of patience with Yasiel Puig in 2016. They came close to trading him at the midseason deadline then demoted him to Triple-A when they didn't. Puig returned in September apparently humbled, professing a new commitment to preparation. That new leaf will be tested in 2017 — if Puig is still in Dodger blue come Opening Day. His inability to consistently perform at the All-Star level he flashed in his first two seasons is likely to make him a role player in a deep outfield corps. The Dodgers figure to platoon heavily while choosing from a group that includes right-handed hitters Puig, Trayce Thompson, Darin Ruf, Scott Van Slyke and Hernandez and lefty-swinging Andre Ethier, Joc Pederson and Andrew Toles.

Seager: AP Images; Kershaw: Tom DiPace

CLAYTON KERSHAW

➤ PROJECTED LINEUP

NEXT LEVEL

LINEUP

2B	Enrique Hernandez (R)
SS	Corey Seager (L)
1B	Adrian Gonzalez (L)
3B	Justin Turner (R)
C	**Yasmani Grandal (S)**
LF	Andre Ethier (L)
CF	Joc Pederson (L)
RF	Andrew Toles (L)

BENCH

C	Austin Barnes (R)
OF	Scott Van Slyke (R)
OF	Trayce Thompson (R)
1B/OF	Darin Ruf (R)
OF	**Yasiel Puig (R)**

ROTATION

LHP	Clayton Kershaw
LHP	Rich Hill
RHP	**Kenta Maeda**
LHP	Julio Urias
LHP	Alex Wood

BULLPEN

RHP	Kenley Jansen (Closer)
RHP	Josh Fields
LHP	Grant Dayton
RHP	**Chris Hatcher**
LHP	Luis Avilan
RHP	Pedro Baez
LHP	Vidal Nuno

Yasmani Grandal remains one of the best pitch framers in baseball; he ranked second in Called Strikes Above Average at 2.7 percent. He's ranked in the top seven in all five years he's been in the majors.

Before his demotion in early August, Yasiel Puig was slugging only .386. But during September, he regained his old power, slugging .561 in 65 plate appearances.

Batters made contact on only 74.5 percent of Kenta Maeda's pitches they swung at, which was eighth best in baseball and led rookie starters.

Chris Hatcher gave up hard contact on 39.7 percent of the contact he induced, which was the fourth-highest rate among relievers with at least 40 innings.

➤ SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE DODGERS

"You've got to consider the Dodgers the favorites again, but the division should be better behind them, and you really have no idea what they'll get after Clayton Kershaw in that rotation. There's the usual logjam in the outfield corners, but that lineup has three exceptional talents. Adrian Gonzalez has one of the best swings I've ever seen, so good that he can compensate for some decline in bat speed by staying inside the ball so well and driving it the other way with power. Corey Seager is a batting champion in waiting; he has very advanced knowledge of the strike zone and tremendous bat speed. Joc Pederson's got as much power as anybody in baseball, and he knows it. He's a big swing and miss guy, but it doesn't seem to bother him. He's arrogant about his ability to hit, but that actually serves him well. He's one of the most confident players in the game."

➤ STATISTICIAN

2 Dodgers managers to win the National League Manager of the Year Award. Tommy Lasorda won it in 1983 (the award's first year) and 1988. Dave Roberts won it in 2016.

17 Dodgers players who have won the National League Rookie of the Year award. Shortstop Corey Seager became the third to win it unanimously in 2016.

4 Rookies in the divisional era (since 1969) to rank in the National League's top 10 in batting average and slugging percentage. Seager joined Dusty Baker (1972), Mike Piazza (1993) and Albert Pujols (2001).

5 Clayton Kershaw's finish in the 2016 NL Cy Young Award voting. That ended a record five consecutive seasons Kershaw finished in the top three.

75 Days Kershaw spent on the DL due to a mildly herniated disc in his back.

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3 SD	4 SD	5 SD	6 SD	7 COL	8 COL
9 COL	10 CHC	11	12 CHC	13 CHC	14 ARI	15 ARI
16 ARI	17 ARI	18 COL	19 COL	20	21 ARI	22 ARI
23 ARI	24 SF	25 SF	26 SF	27 SF	28 PHI	29 PHI
30 PHI						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 SF	2 SF	3 SF	4	5 SD	6 SD
7 SD	8 PIT	9 PIT	10 PIT	11 COL	12 COL	13 COL
14 COL	15 SF	16 SF	17 SF	18 MIA	19 MIA	20 MIA
21 MIA	22	23 STL	24 STL	25 STL	26 CHC	27 CHC
28 CHC	29 STL	30 STL	31 STL			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 STL	2 MIL	3 MIL
4 MIL	5 WAS	6 WAS	7 WAS	8	9 CIN	10 CIN
11 CIN	12	13 CLE	14 CLE	15 CLE	16 CIN	17 CIN
18 CIN	19 NYM	20 NYM	21 NYM	22 NYM	23 COL	24 COL
25 COL	26 LAA	27 LAA	28 LAA	29 LAA	30 SD	

July

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 SD
2 SD	3	4 ARI	5 ARI	6 ARI	7 KC	8 KC
9 KC	10	11	12	13	14 MIA	15 MIA
16 MIA	17	18 CWS	19 CWS	20 ATL	21 ATL	22 ATL
23 ATL	24 MIN	25 MIN	26 MIN	27	28 SF	29 SF
30 SF	31					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 ATL	2 ATL	3 ATL	4 NYM	5 NYM
6 NYM	7	8 ARI	9 ARI	10 ARI	11 SD	12 SD
13 SD	14	15 CWS	16 CWS	17	18 DET	19 DET
20 DET	21 PIT	22 PIT	23 PIT	24 PIT	25 MIL	26 MIL
27 MIL	28	29 ARI	30 ARI	31 ARI		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 SD	2 SD
3 SD	4 ARI	5 ARI	6 ARI	7 COL	8 COL	9 COL
10 COL	11 SF	12 SF	13 SF	14	15 WAS	16 WAS
17 WAS	18 PHI	19 PHI	20 PHI	21 PHI	22 SF	23 SF
24 SF	25 SD	26 SD	27 SD	28	29 COL	30 COL
1 COL						

CATCHING Yasmani Grandal is the new-age idea of a star catcher. He led all catchers with 27 home runs, had a .827 OPS despite a .230 batting average and was among the top receivers in the emerging area of pitch framing, adding 24 runs in value by one estimate (second only to Buster Posey). Grandal has been prone to injuries, but the Dodgers' faith in him was evident in their trade of veteran backup A.J. Ellis. Ellis' departure clears the way for young catcher Austin Barnes to serve as Grandal's backup. Acquired from the Marlins in December 2014, Barnes served a two-year apprenticeship at Triple-A.

BENCH The Dodgers embrace the idea of maximizing production by frequent use of platoons and matchup-driven lineups. They also prefer to shorten the bench in favor of a deeper bullpen. That makes versatility a must among role players, and the makeup of the bench is likely to change frequently over the course of the season — a backup catcher (Barnes) and extra outfielders the only certainties.

MANAGEMENT Dave Roberts was a bit of a surprise as the Dodgers' choice to succeed Don Mattingly as manager in 2016. But the choice was a winning one. Roberts guided the Dodgers through a record number of DL moves (including losing Kershaw for 10 weeks in the second half of the season), a major-league high 70 games started by rookie pitchers and an unprecedented 606 pitching changes and still won 91 games and the NL West title. Roberts' relentless optimism and upbeat energy played well in a clubhouse.

FINAL ANALYSIS Going into the offseason, the Dodgers' goal was simple — keep as much of the roster intact as possible. They went 3-for-3 in the most important parts of that process, re-signing Jansen, Turner and Hill. Given the likelihood of better health this year, another year of maturity for the young players like Seager and the fruits of a loaded farm system, the Dodgers appear to be the most obvious threat to the Chicago Cubs' reign over the National League.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

JACKIE The Dodgers will unveil a Jackie Robinson statue at Dodger Stadium on April 15, the 70th anniversary of Robinson's major-league debut with the Brooklyn Dodgers. Sculptor Branly Cadet was selected to create the approximately 10-foot statue which will be placed at an unspecified location at the stadium. Robinson's wife, Rachel, has attended Jackie Robinson Day ceremonies at Dodger Stadium in the past.

SO LONG VIN The 2017 season will be the first since 1949 without Hall of Fame broadcaster Vin Scully. Scully retired after his 67th season as the Dodgers' play-by-play broadcaster in 2016. "I have said enough for a lifetime and for the last time I wish you all a very pleasant good afternoon," Scully said as he signed off from his final broadcast. Scully (who turned 89 in November) went to the White House to receive the Presidential Medal of Freedom. President Barack Obama called Scully's voice one of baseball's "signature sounds." "You hear the crack of the bat. You've got the crowd singing in the seventh-inning stretch," the president said. "And you've got the voice of Vin Scully."

BIG MONEY The Dodgers led the major leagues in payroll for the third consecutive season in 2016 with approximately $253 million in salaries and bonuses. That cost them an additional $31.8 million in competitive balance tax for surpassing the luxury-tax threshold for a fourth consecutive season. In all, they have paid $113 million in luxury tax over the past four seasons, including a record $43 million following the 2015 season. The new collective bargaining agreement ratified in December imposes even greater tax penalties as well as draft-pick penalties for continuing to exceed the luxury tax threshold.

WELCOME BACK Kenley Jansen made two big commitments on the same weekend in December. First, the 29-year-old closer got married in his native Curacao. At the time, Jansen was a free agent, with the Miami Marlins and Washington Nationals pursuing his services and offering slightly more money than the Dodgers. Jansen's teammates Scott Van Slyke, Justin Turner and Yasiel Puig attended the wedding, and Jansen's agent, Adam Katz, said something changed during the weekend. "He pivoted over the weekend," Katz said in a radio interview a week later. "I don't know what it was. I think it was family. He had some teammates there. ... It became difficult for him to process leaving. He pivoted over the weekend. He wanted to be a Dodger, no matter what."

AP Images

DODGERS ROSTER

General Manager: Farhan Zaidi **Manager:** Dave Roberts **Coaches:** Josh Bard (bullpen), Juan Castro (quality assurance), Bob Geren (bench), Rick Honeycutt (pitching), Tim Hyers (asst. hitting), George Lombard (first base), Turner Ward (hitting), Chris Woodward (third base), Steve Yeager (catching)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
43	Luis Avilan	L-L	6-2	225	7/19/89	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**3-0**	**3.20**	**27**	**0**	**0**	**19.2**	**12**	**10**	**28**
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	0-3	4.24	33	0	4	34.0	35	16	37
52	Pedro Baez	R-R	6-0	235	3/11/88	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**3-2**	**3.04**	**73**	**0**	**0**	**74.0**	**52**	**22**	**83**
75	Grant Dayton	L-L	6-2	195	11/25/87	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**0-1**	**2.05**	**25**	**0**	**0**	**26.1**	**14**	**6**	**39**
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	2-2	2.48	26	0	4	36.1	22	8	63
						Tulsa (AA)	3-0	2.30	12	0	1	15.2	8	3	28
	Chase De Jong	L-R	6-4	205	12/29/93	Oklahoma City (AAA)	1-0	1.69	1	1	0	5.1	6	1	8
						Tulsa (AA)	14-5	2.86	25	25	0	141.2	106	39	125
87	Jose De Leon	R-R	6-2	190	8/7/92	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**2-0**	**6.35**	**4**	**4**	**0**	**17.0**	**19**	**7**	**15**
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	7-1	2.61	16	16	0	86.1	61	20	111
46	Josh Fields	R-R	6-0	195	8/19/85	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**1-0**	**2.79**	**22**	**0**	**0**	**19.1**	**20**	**8**	**22**
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	0-1	9.00	2	0	0	2.0	3	0	2
						HOUSTON	**0-0**	**6.89**	**15**	**0**	**0**	**15.2**	**23**	**3**	**20**
						Fresno (AAA)	1-0	1.65	23	0	1	27.1	19	7	32
77	Carlos Frias	R-R	6-4	195	11/13/89	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**0-0**	**0.00**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**4.0**	**2**	**1**	**3**
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	3-3	4.46	8	4	0	36.1	37	11	27
						Tulsa (AA)	0-0	1.29	2	2	0	7.0	3	0	5
63	Yimi Garcia	R-R	6-1	220	8/18/90	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**0-0**	**3.24**	**9**	**0**	**0**	**8.1**	**9**	**1**	**4**
						Tulsa (AA)	0-1	10.80	3	0	0	3.1	4	0	5
						R. Cucamonga (A)	0-0	6.00	2	2	0	3.0	3	0	5
41	Chris Hatcher	R-R	6-1	200	1/12/85	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**5-4**	**5.53**	**37**	**0**	**0**	**40.2**	**40**	**21**	**43**
44	Rich Hill	L-L	6-5	220	3/11/80	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**3-2**	**1.83**	**6**	**6**	**0**	**34.1**	**22**	**5**	**39**
						OAKLAND	**9-3**	**2.25**	**14**	**14**	**0**	**76.0**	**55**	**28**	**90**
74	Kenley Jansen	S-R	6-5	270	9/30/87	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**3-2**	**1.83**	**71**	**0**	**47**	**68.2**	**35**	**11**	**104**
29	Scott Kazmir	L-L	6-0	195	1/24/84	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**10-6**	**4.56**	**26**	**26**	**0**	**136.1**	**133**	**52**	**134**
22	Clayton Kershaw	L-L	6-4	225	3/19/88	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**12-4**	**1.69**	**21**	**21**	**0**	**149.0**	**97**	**11**	**172**
36	Adam Liberatore	L-L	6-3	240	5/12/87	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**2-2**	**3.38**	**58**	**0**	**0**	**42.2**	**34**	**17**	**47**
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	0-0	0.00	4	0	1	5.0	0	2	10
18	Kenta Maeda	R-R	6-1	175	4/11/88	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**16-11**	**3.48**	**32**	**32**	**0**	**175.2**	**150**	**50**	**179**
38	Brandon McCarthy	R-R	6-7	235	7/7/83	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**2-3**	**4.95**	**10**	**9**	**0**	**40.0**	**29**	**26**	**44**
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	0-0	2.45	1	1	0	3.2	3	2	4
						R. Cucamonga (A)	0-2	7.07	4	4	0	14.0	21	2	12
	Vidal Nuno	L-L	5-11	210	7/26/87	**SEATTLE**	**1-1**	**3.53**	**55**	**1**	**0**	**58.2**	**67**	**11**	**51**
71	Josh Ravin	R-R	6-4	215	1/21/88	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**0-0**	**0.93**	**10**	**0**	**0**	**9.2**	**2**	**4**	**13**
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	4.0	1	1	7
						R. Cucamonga (A)	0-0	9.00	1	1	0	1.0	1	0	1
						AZL Dodgers (R)	0-0	1.80	4	2	0	5.0	2	0	11
	Jacob Rhame	R-R	6-1	215	3/16/93	Oklahoma City (AAA)	1-7	3.29	54	0	7	63.0	53	28	70
99	Hyun-Jin Ryu	R-L	6-3	250	3/25/87	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**0-1**	**11.57**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**4.2**	**8**	**2**	**4**
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	0-1	8.38	3	3	0	9.2	17	0	9
						R. Cucamonga (A)	1-1	2.00	5	5	0	18.0	15	1	14
48	Brock Stewart	L-R	6-3	210	10/3/91	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**2-2**	**5.79**	**7**	**5**	**0**	**28.0**	**33**	**12**	**25**
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	4-0	2.49	9	9	0	50.2	41	6	54
						Tulsa (AA)	3-4	1.37	10	10	0	59.1	41	11	65
						R. Cucamonga (A)	2-0	0.82	2	2	0	11.0	5	2	10
68	Ross Stripling	R-R	6-3	210	11/23/89	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**5-9**	**3.96**	**22**	**14**	**0**	**100.0**	**96**	**30**	**74**
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	0-2	3.78	5	4	0	16.2	20	2	17
7	Julio Urias	L-L	6-0	215	8/12/96	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**5-2**	**3.39**	**18**	**15**	**0**	**77.0**	**81**	**31**	**84**
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	5-1	1.40	11	7	0	45.0	31	8	49
57	Alex Wood	R-L	6-4	215	1/12/91	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**1-4**	**3.73**	**14**	**10**	**0**	**60.1**	**56**	**20**	**66**

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
15	Austin Barnes	R-R	5-10	195	12/28/89	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**.156**	**21**	**32**	**3**	**5**	**0**	**2**	**5**	**9**	**0**
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	.295	85	336	59	99	6	39	43	53	18
	Kyle Farmer	R-R	6-0	205	8/17/90	Tulsa (AA)	.256	74	266	31	68	5	31	25	44	2
						AZL Dodgers (R)	.294	4	17	4	5	2	4	1	1	0
9	Yasmani Grandal	S-R	6-1	235	11/8/88	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**.228**	**126**	**390**	**49**	**89**	**27**	**72**	**64**	**116**	**1**
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	.333	4	9	1	3	1	3	2	4	0

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
23	Adrian Gonzalez	L-L	6-2	215	5/8/82	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**.285**	**156**	**568**	**69**	**162**	**18**	**90**	**55**	**117**	**0**
14	Enrique Hernandez	R-R	5-11	200	8/24/91	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**.190**	**109**	**216**	**25**	**41**	**7**	**18**	**28**	**64**	**2**
17	Micah Johnson	L-R	6-0	210	12/18/90	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**.167**	**7**	**6**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	.261	120	464	72	121	5	37	41	105	26
	Darin Ruf	R-R	6-3	250	7/28/86	**PHILADELPHIA**	**.205**	**43**	**83**	**8**	**17**	**3**	**9**	**4**	**25**	**0**
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	.294	95	350	56	103	20	65	29	78	0
5	Corey Seager	L-R	6-4	215	4/27/94	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**.308**	**157**	**627**	**105**	**193**	**26**	**72**	**54**	**133**	**3**
25	Rob Segedin	R-R	6-2	220	11/10/88	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**.233**	**40**	**73**	**9**	**17**	**2**	**12**	**6**	**22**	**0**
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	.319	103	373	71	119	21	69	40	81	3
3	Chris Taylor	R-R	6-1	195	8/29/90	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**.207**	**34**	**58**	**8**	**12**	**1**	**7**	**4**	**13**	**0**
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	.368	15	57	7	21	0	8	6	16	5
						SEATTLE	**.333**	**2**	**3**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**2**	**0**
						Tacoma (AAA)	.312	63	247	41	77	3	29	29	49	12
10	Justin Turner	R-R	5-11	205	11/23/84	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**.275**	**151**	**556**	**79**	**153**	**27**	**90**	**48**	**107**	**4**

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
16	Andre Ethier	L-L	6-2	210	4/10/82	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**.208**	**16**	**24**	**2**	**5**	**1**	**2**	**2**	**6**	**0**
						R. Cucamonga (A)	.290	9	31	7	9	0	3	1	6	0
31	Joc Pederson	L-L	6-1	220	4/21/92	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**.246**	**137**	**406**	**64**	**100**	**25**	**68**	**63**	**130**	**6**
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	.625	3	8	1	5	0	0	4	1	0
66	Yasiel Puig	R-R	6-2	240	12/7/90	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**.263**	**104**	**334**	**45**	**88**	**11**	**45**	**24**	**74**	**5**
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	.348	19	69	12	24	4	12	6	8	0
						R. Cucamonga (A)	.417	5	12	2	5	1	2	3	3	1
21	Trayce Thompson	R-R	6-3	225	3/15/91	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**.225**	**80**	**236**	**31**	**53**	**13**	**32**	**26**	**66**	**5**
60	Andrew Toles	L-R	5-10	185	5/24/92	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**.314**	**48**	**105**	**19**	**33**	**3**	**16**	**8**	**25**	**1**
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	.321	17	56	6	18	2	7	2	8	1
						Tulsa (AA)	.314	43	175	27	55	5	22	12	30	13
						R. Cucamonga (A)	.370	22	92	22	34	0	9	6	13	9
33	Scott Van Slyke	R-R	6-4	215	7/24/86	**LOS ANGELES NL**	**.225**	**52**	**102**	**10**	**23**	**1**	**7**	**5**	**24**	**1**

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

GAVIN LUX, SS

Even as Corey Seager was having a Rookie of the Year season at the major-league level, the Dodgers took another high-school shortstop with their first pick in the 2016 draft. Seager (in 2012) and Lux are the only position players the Dodgers have taken with their first pick in the past 14 drafts. The 6'2", 190-pound Lux, taken No. 20 overall, debuted by hitting .296 in 56 games at the rookie-level last summer with an impressive .375 on-base percentage. The Dodgers believe Lux has the skill set to play shortstop at the big-league level, but the 19-year-old had limited experience at the high school level in Wisconsin compared to players from warmer climes.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Cody Bellinger, 1B/OF (21) The son of former Yankee Clay Bellinger has shown pop (23 home runs in Double-A last year) and the exceptional athleticism to be a plus-defender at first base and also handle center field.

2. Jose De Leon, RHP (24) A 24th-round pick in 2013, De Leon dominated Triple-A hitters last year and made four late-season starts for the Dodgers.

3. Yadier Alvarez, RHP (20) The most expensive prospect ($16 million) in an international signing binge by the Dodgers two years ago, the Cuban hit 100 mph on the radar gun while debuting in Single-A last year.

4. Alex Verdugo, OF (21) One of the youngest position players in Double-A last year, Verdugo held his own by batting .273 with 13 home runs, 63 RBIs and a .743 OPS.

5. Willie Calhoun, 2B (22) Undersized at 5'8", 187 pounds, Calhoun showed no shortage of confidence while hitting 27 homers in Double-A.

6. Austin Barnes, C (27) Barnes had a second solid season at Triple-A in 2016 and is penciled in to serve as Yasmani Grandal's backup in 2017.

7. Walker Buehler, RHP (22) The Dodgers' first-round pick in 2015 had Tommy John surgery almost immediately after the draft but is healthy now and could progress quickly.

8. Yusniel Diaz, OF (20) Another Cuban product signed for big money, Diaz's skill set was evident as he hit .272 with a .751 OPS in a half-season at Class-A Rancho Cucamonga last year.

9. Gavin Lux, SS (19) The first shortstop selected in the 2016 draft, Lux will get his first full season test as a professional in 2017, most likely at Class-A Great Lakes

10. Trevor Oaks, RHP (23) Oaks made an under-the-radar move up the Dodgers' depth chart in 2016 by progressing from Single-A to Triple-A, going 14–3 with a 2.74 ERA.

SAN DIEGO PADRES

After a season of upheaval and embarrassment on and off the field, the Padres begin the first full year of their deep rebuild with no expectations of a winning season. After their win-now experiment of 2015 failed, they floundered around in 2016 before deciding to get significantly younger and focus on building for the future. While their farm system is bursting with prospects, it's grim at the big-league level. Executive Chairman Ron Fowler said in September that he was looking to get to .500 "hopefully in two years." That doesn't bode well for fans who haven't cheered a winning team since 2010 and haven't seen playoff ball at Petco Park since 2006. General manager A.J. Preller has a reputation to rebuild after he was suspended without pay for 30 days by MLB for failing to disclose medical information in the trade of All-Star Drew Pomeranz and other players. In another shocker, team president Mike Dee was abruptly fired on Oct. 12. After a particularly bad performance in early June, Fowler labeled the Padres "miserable failures." This year, it could be worse.

ROTATION Nowhere is the rebuild more apparent than the rotation. All five starters on the 2016 Opening Day roster are gone. James Shields, Andrew Cashner and Pomeranz were traded. Colin Rea had Tommy John surgery in November. Tyson Ross, who started on Opening Day and then missed the rest of the season with a shoulder injury, was non-tendered. Preller didn't sign his first big-league free agent of the offseason until Dec. 17, when he added righthander Jhoulys Chacin. A few days later, Preller re-signed lefty Clayton Richard, who at 33 is the oldest player on the team. The most promising starter coming back is Luis Perdomo, who made the jump from Single-A to the bigs as a Rule 5 draftee and led the team's starters with nine victories. Others expected to be in the mix are Jarred Cosart, lefthander Christian Friedrich and Paul Clemens.

BULLPEN The Padres are eager to find out if Carter Capps will pick up where he left off in 2015 before Tommy John surgery cost him all of last season. Capps came over from the Marlins in the Cashner deal. Manager Andy Green is looking at Capps in the closer's role and keeping Brandon Maurer in the eighth-inning role. Maurer has a little more resilient arm than Capps, considering that he's coming off the elbow injury. Before he got hurt, Capps had a 1.16 ERA with 58 strikeouts in 31 innings as a Marlins reliever in 2015. Maurer can close, if necessary, having converted 13-of-15 chances after Fernando Rodney was traded. The Padres will rely again on their workhorses, lefties Brad Hand and Ryan Buchter. Hand made an MLB-high 82 relief appearances, with a 2.92 ERA and a .195 opponents' batting average. Buchter made 67 relief appearances, with a 2.86 ERA and .160 opponents' BA.

MIDDLE INFIELD One of the more intriguing stories of 2016 was second baseman Ryan Schimpf, who made his big-league debut at age 28. He made 66 starts at second base and 12 at third base. Remarkably, of his 60 hits, 42 were for extra bases, with 20 homers, 17 doubles and five triples. Opening Day second baseman Cory Spangenberg injured his left quad on April 20 and missed the rest of the season. He'll be back. At shortstop, the Padres gave up on Alexei Ramirez, who was viewed as a one-year stopgap anyway, and turned to Luis Sardinas, who better fits the Padres' mold since he's only 23. Sardinas likely is bridging the gap to one of the club's top prospects, Javier Guerra.

CORNERS Wil Myers is the lone remaining veteran from Preller's wild offseason shopping spree prior to the 2015 season. He's outlasted Matt Kemp, Shields, Justin and Melvin Upton, Derek Norris and Craig Kimbrel. Myers became the full-time first baseman and responded by being named to his first All-Star team. He had a career year with a .259 average, 28 home runs, 94 RBIs and 28 stolen bases. Yangervis Solarte is the incumbent third baseman. Solarte played through a tough season, first dealing with a strained hamstring and then with the death of his wife, Yulliet, due to cancer late in the season. Solarte, the father of three girls, returned to the Padres for the final few games. He hit .286 with 15 homers, career highs.

OUTFIELD The Padres have five outfielders battling for four spots, including left fielder Alex Dickerson, center fielders Travis Jankowski and rookie Manuel Margot, and rookie right fielder Hunter Renfroe. Jankowski made 82 starts in his first full big-league season, and Dickerson played in 84 games last year. Dickerson made 65 starts in left, taking over on July 24. Renfroe, the Padres' first-round draft pick in 2013, was named the MVP of the Pacific Coast League. After a late-season call-up, he excited fans by hitting four home runs in 11 games. Margot was one of four prospects acquired from Boston for Kimbrel. Both Margot and Jankowski can play positions other than center, and Jankowski could be the starter in left. The fifth outfielder is Jabari Blash, who made the Opening Day roster as a Rule 5 draftee but didn't stick the entire year.

2017 PREDICTION
XXX
NL West

2016 RECORD
68-94

HOME: 39-42 **ROAD:** 29-52

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

TEAM INFO

PETCO PARK
Opened: 2004 **Capacity:** 42,445
Left: 336' **Center:** 396' **Right:** 322'
Tickets: 877-374-2784
sandiego.padres.mlb.com

➤ FANTASY TICKER

BLUE CHIP BOPPER
1B Wil Myers

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
None

BULL MARKET
RHP Luis Perdomo

BEAR MARKET
2B Ryan Schimpf

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
RHP Carter Capps

IPO OF Manuel Margot

FUTURES MARKET RHP Anderson Espinoza

INSIDER TIP The Padres are more utterly bereft of established-value players than any team in memory. Speculative end-game targets include Margot, Perdomo, Hunter Renfroe, Austin Hedges and Travis Jankowski.

➤ STATLINE

RBI% BY 3RD BASEMAN: 2016

1. Yangervis Solarte, Padres	**20.82**
2. Nolan Arenado, Rockies	20.58
3. Adrian Beltre, Rangers	18.18
4. Jose Ramirez, Indians	17.57
5. Matt Carpenter, Cardinals	17.34

(min. 250 runners on base)

Myers: Tom DiPace; Perdomo: AP Images

WIL MYERS

➤ PROJECTED LINEUP

NEXT LEVEL

LINEUP

LF	Travis Jankowski (L)
CF	Manuel Margot (R)
1B	**Wil Myers (R)**
3B	Yangervis Solarte (S)
RF	Hunter Renfroe (R)
2B	Ryan Schimpf (L)
C	Austin Hedges (R)
SS	Luis Sardinas (S)

BENCH

UT	Christian Bethancourt (R)
2B	Cory Spangenberg (L)
UT	**Alex Dickerson (L)**
C	Luis Torrens (R)
SS	Allen Cordoba (R)

ROTATION

RHP	Jhoulys Chacin
LHP	Clayton Richard
RHP	**Luis Perdomo**
LHP	Christian Friedrich
RHP	Paul Clemens

BULLPEN

RHP	Carter Capps (Closer)
RHP	Brandon Maurer
RHP	**Kevin Quackenbush**
LHP	Brad Hand
LHP	Ryan Buchter
RHP	Cesar Vargas
RHP	Jarred Cosart

Wil Myers faded after an incredible first half. Before the All-Star Break, he slashed .286/.351/.522 but stumbled to a .223/.316/.381 second half. Nineteen of his 28 homers and 15 of his 28 steals came in the first half.

Despite Petco Park's pitcher-friendly confines, Alex Dickerson fared much better at home (.294/.388/.505) than on the road (.229/.288/.417).

Luis Perdomo's 59.0 percent ground ball rate was topped only by Marcus Stroman among pitchers with 100 IP. However, opponents hit .276 on grounders against him, 37 points above league average.

Kevin Quackenbush gave up hard contact on 43.9 percent of balls put in play against him, which is the highest hard contact rate ever recorded for a qualified reliever.

➤ SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE PADRES

"They could lose 120 games. Holy cow, that rotation is eye-poppingly bad. It's a tryout camp over there. I guess if you want to be optimistic, you can look at the ceiling of some of their young prospects, like Hunter Renfroe, Manuel Margot and maybe Austin Hedges or Alex Dickerson. Wil Myers is their best player and maybe their only untouchable. If you can live with all the strikeouts, bad at-bats, and poor defense, Ryan Schimpf can change a few games with his power. Some people see Travis Jankowski as an everyday center fielder, but I can't go there. He's a good defender who can steal bases, but he's a pure singles hitter — there's no sting there at all. Renfroe's the most exciting young player they have. He'll look to launch, then make adjustments with two strikes. He can really throw and can run decent for a physical guy."

➤ STATISTICIAN

3	Positions Christian Bethancourt could play in 2016: pitcher, catcher, outfield.
3	Potential spots used by Rule 5 draftees on the 25-man roster.
$32	Amount, in millions, the Padres are paying former players James Shields, Melvin Upton Jr., Matt Kemp and Hector Olivera.
33	Clayton Richard's age, making him the oldest Padres player by nearly four years.
42	Extra-base hits, among 60 hits, by Ryan Schimpf in 2016.
$73	Amount, in millions, spent by the Padres on international prospects since July.
94	Losses by the Padres in 2016; it's the third time in nine seasons they've had at least 91 losses.
157	Games played by Wil Myers in a welcome injury-free season.

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3 LAD	4 LAD	5 LAD	6 LAD	7 SF	8 SF
9 SF	10 COL	11 COL	12 COL	13	14 ATL	15 ATL
16 ATL	17 ATL	18 ARI	19 ARI	20 ARI	21 MIA	22 MIA
23 MIA	24 ARI	25 ARI	26 ARI	27 ARI	28 SF	29 SF
30 SF						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2 COL	3 COL	4 COL	5 LAD	6 LAD
7 LAD	8 TEX	9 TEX	10 TEX	11 TEX	12 CWS	13 CWS
14 CWS	15 MIL	16 MIL	17 MIL	18 MIL	19 ARI	20 ARI
21 ARI	22	23 NYM	24 NYM	25 NYM	26 WAS	27 WAS
28 WAS	29 CHC	30 CHC	31 CHC			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2 COL	3 COL
4 COL	5	6 ARI	7 ARI	8 ARI	9 KC	10 KC
11 KC	12 CIN	13 CIN	14 CIN	15	16 MIL	17 MIL
18 MIL	19 CHC	20 CHC	21 CHC	22	23 DET	24 DET
25 DET	26	27 ATL	28 ATL	29 ATL	30 ATL	

July

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 LAD
2 LAD	3	4 CLE	5 CLE	6 CLE	7 PHI	8 PHI
9 PHI	10	11	12	13	14 SF	15 SF
16 SF	17 COL	18 COL	19 COL	20 SF	21 SF	22 SF
23 SF	24 NYM	25 NYM	26 NM	27 NYM	28 PIT	29 PIT
30 PIT	31					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 MIN	2 MIN	3	4 PIT	5 PIT
6 PIT	7 CIN	8 CIN	9 CIN	10 CIN	11 LAD	12 LAD
13 LAD	14 PHI	15 PHI	16 PHI	17 WAS	18 WAS	19 WAS
20 WAS	21	22 STL	23 STL	24 STL	25 MIA	26 MIA
27 MIA	28 SF	29 SF	30 SF	31		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 LAD	2 LAD
3 LAD	4 STL	5 STL	6 STL	7 STL	8 ARI	9 ARI
10 ARI	11	12 MIN	13 MIN	14	15 COL	16 COL
17 COL	18 ARI	19 ARI	20 ARI	21 COL	22 COL	23 COL
24 COL	25 LAD	26 LAD	27 LAD	28	29 SF	30 SF
1 SF						

TRAVIS JANKOWSKI

CATCHING Austin Hedges is the heir apparent after Norris was traded to the Nationals. Hedges made his big-league debut with the Padres in 2015 when he played 56 games. He broke a bone in his left hand early last season in Triple-A, preventing the team from bringing him up. While he had a nice offensive year in Triple-A, it's his defense the Padres will rely on most, with Green praising his game-calling and pitch-framing ability. One of the more intriguing offseason developments was the Padres' announcement that they were considering turning Christian Bethancourt into a multi-position player.

BENCH Having Bethancourt in a projected super-utility role will make it easier for the Padres to carry Luis Torrens as a third catcher. Spangenberg will be back in the mix at second base after missing much of 2016 with a quad injury. Shortstop Allen Cordoba, a Rule 5 pickup, will have a spot here if he sticks on the roster. The Padres will have a mix of four outfielders, allowing Green to give them days off here and there.

MANAGEMENT The Padres are all-in on their deep rebuild, from lead investor Peter Seidler — a nephew of former Dodgers owner Peter O'Malley — to Fowler to Preller to Green. After the mysterious dismissal of Dee, the team president, in October, Preller will now report directly to ownership. Green has settled nicely into his job. The former big-league infielder and minor-league manager is confident and comfortable in his abilities, although he's being given precious little to work with.

FINAL ANALYSIS Petco Park is a great place for fans to enjoy craft beer and good food. Sadly, good baseball doesn't appear to be on the menu anytime soon as the Padres trot out a young team. Yes, it'll be great for fans who like to see top prospects. Green suggested late last year that everyone "embrace the process." That's not exactly what most fans want to hear after watching too much losing ball over the decades. There will be far more growing pains than big moments.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

CORE FOUR Hunter Renfroe, Austin Hedges, Manuel Margot and Carlos Asuaje gave Padres fans a glimpse of the future after being called up late in the season. They helped Triple-A El Paso win the Pacific Coast League title and advance to the Triple-A National Championship Game before losing to Scranton/Wilkes-Barre. Margot and Asuaje were among the four top prospects obtained from Boston in the trade for Craig Kimbrel.

UNIFORMLY BAD The Padres were panned when they unveiled new uniforms for 2017, including a return to navy and white home uniforms, as well as gray road unis. Most fans feel the duds are simply too boring. Gone is the yellow accent that was on the uniforms to celebrate the All-Star Game being played at Petco Park in 2016. There will still be an alternate brown jersey for Friday night home games, a nod to the mustard-and-mud color scheme of the 1980s.

TRIPLE THREAT The Padres are mulling the idea of turning catcher Christian Bethancourt into a super utility player who can pitch, catch and roam the outfield. Bethancourt has a strong arm and made two relief appearances, throwing 1.2 scoreless innings. Manager Andy Green says the Padres will "run as far down that road as his arm allows us to."

HONORED Padres third baseman Yangervis Solarte won the Tony Conigliaro Award, given annually to the big leaguer who has overcome adversity. Solarte was nominated by the Padres after his wife, Yuliett Pimentel Solarte, died of cancer in September. Solarte had left the team to be with her earlier in the year, and he returned in mid-September when her condition worsened. She died on Sept. 17. Solarte returned to the team for the final few games.

WBC RETURNS Petco Park will host second-round games of the 2017 World Baseball Classic from March 14-19. The four teams coming to San Diego will be from Pools C (the U.S., defending champion Dominican Republic, Canada and Colombia) and D (Mexico, Venezuela, Puerto Rico and Italy). Petco hosted the inaugural WBC semifinals and finals in 2006 and second-round games in 2009.

LOTS OF PROSPECTS Of the Padres' top 30 prospects, 19 played their first season in the organization in 2016. The club also signed eight of MLB.com's top-30 international prospects — pitcher Michell Miliano, catcher Alison Quintero, infielders Luis Almanzar, Gabriel Arias, Justin Lopez and Yordy Barley, and outfielders Jeisson Rosario and Tirso Ornelas.

Tom DiPace

PADRES ROSTER

General Manager: A.J. Preller **Manager:** Andy Green **Coaches:** Darren Balsley (pitching), Doug Bochtler (bullpen), Tarrik Brock (first base), Glenn Hoffman (third base), Mark McGwire (bench), Eddie Rodriguez (coach), Alan Zinter (hitting)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
77	Buddy Baumann	L-L	5-11	195	12/9/87	**SAN DIEGO**	**1-0**	**3.72**	**11**	**0**	**0**	**9.2**	**7**	**4**	**10**
						El Paso (AAA)	1-1	3.14	24	0	2	28.2	22	12	31
40	Ryan Buchter	L-L	6-4	250	2/13/87	**SAN DIEGO**	**3-0**	**2.86**	**67**	**0**	**1**	**63.0**	**34**	**31**	**78**
						El Paso (AAA)	0-0	18.00	1	0	0	1.0	2	1	1
56	Carter Capps	R-R	6-5	220	8/7/90	Injured — Missed Season									
	Jhoulys Chacin	R-R	6-3	215	1/7/88	**ATLANTA**	**1-2**	**5.40**	**5**	**5**	**0**	**26.2**	**29**	**8**	**27**
						Gwinnett (AAA)	1-0	0.00	1	1	0	7.2	5	2	7
						LOS ANGELES AL	**5-6**	**4.68**	**29**	**17**	**0**	**117.1**	**124**	**47**	**92**
47	Paul Clemens	R-R	6-3	215	2/14/88	**SAN DIEGO**	**3-5**	**3.67**	**16**	**12**	**0**	**61.1**	**61**	**23**	**47**
						MIAMI	**1-0**	**6.30**	**2**	**2**	**0**	**10.0**	**11**	**8**	**6**
						New Orleans (AAA)	6-4	4.30	14	14	0	75.1	66	25	66
55	Jarred Cosart	R-R	6-3	205	5/25/90	**SAN DIEGO**	**0-3**	**6.03**	**9**	**9**	**0**	**37.1**	**42**	**23**	**27**
						MIAMI	**0-1**	**5.95**	**4**	**4**	**0**	**19.2**	**19**	**16**	**11**
						New Orleans (AAA)	3-4	4.09	10	10	0	50.2	55	25	30
	Miguel Diaz	R-R	6-1	175	11/28/94	Wisconsin (A)	1-8	3.71	26	15	3	94.2	83	29	91
41	Robbie Erlin	R-L	6-0	190	10/8/90	**SAN DIEGO**	**1-2**	**4.02**	**3**	**2**	**0**	**15.2**	**12**	**3**	**13**
53	Christian Friedrich	R-L	6-4	215	7/8/87	**SAN DIEGO**	**5-12**	**4.80**	**24**	**23**	**0**	**129.1**	**131**	**52**	**100**
						El Paso (AAA)	0-1	4.66	2	2	0	9.2	12	4	6
						Lake Elsinore (A)	0-0	2.00	2	2	0	9.0	7	0	7
52	Brad Hand	L-L	6-3	220	3/20/90	**SAN DIEGO**	**4-4**	**2.92**	**82**	**0**	**1**	**89.1**	**63**	**36**	**111**
54	Keith Hessler	L-L	6-4	240	3/15/89	**SAN DIEGO**	**1-0**	**3.38**	**15**	**0**	**0**	**18.2**	**19**	**11**	**9**
						El Paso (AAA)	1-1	2.95	28	0	2	36.2	32	12	42
						ARIZONA	**0-0**	**9.00**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**3.0**	**5**	**2**	**2**
						Mobile (AA)	0-0	5.06	7	0	1	5.1	7	3	5
	Zach Lee	R-R	6-4	227	9/13/91	Oklahoma City (AAA)	7-5	4.89	13	13	0	73.2	95	15	57
						Tacoma (AAA)	0-9	7.39	14	14	0	74.1	98	24	50
	Walker Lockett	R-R	6-5	225	5/3/94	El Paso (AAA)	1-2	4.50	3	3	0	18.0	23	2	12
						San Antonio (AA)	4-1	2.08	6	4	0	34.2	27	2	26
						Lake Elsinore (A)	4-3	2.98	11	10	0	66.1	57	12	56
						Fort Wayne (A)	1-3	3.00	8	8	0	45.0	43	8	29
37	Brandon Maurer	R-R	6-5	230	7/3/90	**SAN DIEGO**	**0-5**	**4.52**	**71**	**0**	**13**	**69.2**	**65**	**23**	**72**
61	Luis Perdomo	R-R	6-2	185	5/9/93	**SAN DIEGO**	**9-10**	**5.71**	**35**	**20**	**0**	**146.2**	**187**	**46**	**105**
59	Kevin Quackenbush	R-R	6-4	235	11/28/88	**SAN DIEGO**	**7-7**	**3.92**	**60**	**0**	**2**	**59.2**	**55**	**22**	**42**
						El Paso (AAA)	1-0	2.08	9	0	2	13.0	12	2	16
29	Colin Rea	R-R	6-5	225	7/1/90	**SAN DIEGO**	**5-5**	**4.98**	**19**	**18**	**0**	**99.1**	**101**	**44**	**76**
						MIAMI	**0-0**	**0.00**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**3.1**	**1**	**0**	**4**
	Clayton Richard	L-L	6-5	240	9/12/83	**SAN DIEGO**	**3-3**	**2.52**	**11**	**9**	**0**	**53.2**	**58**	**24**	**34**
						CHICAGO NL	**0-1**	**6.43**	**25**	**0**	**1**	**14.0**	**23**	**7**	**7**
						Iowa (AAA)	0-0	0.00	2	2	0	5.0	1	2	5
						Tennessee (AA)	0-1	3.52	2	2	0	7.2	7	0	5
	Jose Ruiz	R-R	6-1	190	10/21/94	Lake Elsinore (A)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.0	0	1	1
						Tri-City (A)	2-0	0.00	9	0	2	10.2	3	2	12
	Craig Stammen	R-R	6-4	230	3/9/1984	Colo. Sprs. (AAA)	0-3	5.54	10	0	0	13.0	16	2	11
						Akron (AA)	0-1	0.79	10	0	0	11.1	9	3	9
						AZL Indians (R)	1-0	6.00	3	2	0	3.0	4	0	8
76	Jose Torres	L-L	6-2	175	9/24/93	**SAN DIEGO**	**0-0**	**0.00**	**4**	**0**	**0**	**3.0**	**3**	**2**	**3**
						El Paso (AAA)	0-0	3.38	3	0	0	2.2	4	1	2
						San Antonio (AA)	1-2	1.24	25	0	2	36.1	20	12	36
						Lake Elsinore (A)	0-2	3.55	20	0	1	25.1	21	10	25
49	Cesar Vargas	R-R	6-2	220	12/30/91	**SAN DIEGO**	**0-3**	**5.03**	**7**	**7**	**0**	**34.0**	**41**	**15**	**28**
						San Antonio (AA)	0-0	1.42	2	2	0	12.2	5	1	14

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
12	Christian Bethancourt	R-R	6-2	210	9/2/91	**SAN DIEGO**	**.228**	**73**	**193**	**20**	**44**	**6**	**25**	**10**	**56**	**1**
18	Austin Hedges	R-R	6-1	210	8/18/92	**SAN DIEGO**	**.125**	**8**	**24**	**2**	**3**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**7**	**0**
						El Paso (AAA)	.326	82	313	55	102	21	82	13	51	1
	Luis Torrens	R-R	6-0	175	5/2/96	Charlotte (A)	.230	40	139	9	32	2	10	22	26	1
						Staten Island (A)	.311	12	45	6	14	0	5	4	7	1

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
63	Carlos Asuaje	L-R	5-9	160	11/2/91	**SAN DIEGO**	**.208**	**7**	**24**	**2**	**5**	**0**	**2**	**1**	**4**	**0**
						El Paso (AAA)	.321	134	535	98	172	9	69	49	82	10
	Allen Cordoba	R-R	6-1	175	12/6/95	Johnson City (R)	.362	50	196	49	71	0	18	21	19	22
	Javier Guerra	L-R	5-11	155	9/25/95	Lake Elsinore (A)	.202	105	391	49	79	9	41	34	141	4
4	Wil Myers	R-R	6-3	205	12/10/90	**SAN DIEGO**	**.259**	**157**	**599**	**99**	**155**	**28**	**94**	**68**	**160**	**28**
13	Jose Rondon	R-R	6-1	195	3/3/94	**SAN DIEGO**	**.120**	**8**	**25**	**1**	**3**	**0**	**1**	**1**	**4**	**0**
						El Paso (AAA)	.300	24	80	8	24	1	9	1	12	0
						San Antonio (AA)	.279	96	376	45	105	5	44	15	66	13
2	Luis Sardinas	S-R	6-1	180	5/16/93	**SAN DIEGO**	**.287**	**34**	**108**	**13**	**31**	**2**	**13**	**11**	**23**	**3**
						El Paso (AAA)	.263	5	19	5	5	0	1	3	3	1
						SEATTLE	**.181**	**32**	**72**	**12**	**13**	**2**	**5**	**1**	**25**	**1**
						Tacoma (AAA)	.252	44	163	17	41	0	17	9	20	7
11	Ryan Schimpf	L-R	5-9	180	4/11/88	**SAN DIEGO**	**.217**	**89**	**276**	**48**	**60**	**20**	**51**	**42**	**105**	**1**
						El Paso (AAA)	.355	51	166	36	59	15	48	21	33	0
26	Yangervis Solarte	S-R	5-11	205	7/7/87	**SAN DIEGO**	**.286**	**109**	**405**	**55**	**116**	**15**	**71**	**30**	**63**	**1**
15	Cory Spangenberg	L-R	6-0	195	3/16/91	**SAN DIEGO**	**.229**	**14**	**48**	**6**	**11**	**1**	**8**	**4**	**13**	**1**
39	Brett Wallace	L-R	6-2	250	8/26/86	**SAN DIEGO**	**.189**	**119**	**217**	**19**	**41**	**6**	**20**	**29**	**83**	**0**

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
32	Jabari Blash	R-R	6-5	235	7/4/89	**SAN DIEGO**	**.169**	**38**	**71**	**7**	**12**	**3**	**5**	**11**	**34**	**1**
						El Paso (AAA)	.260	62	177	30	46	11	30	41	66	1
	Franchy Cordero	L-R	6-3	175	9/2/94	El Paso (AAA)	.077	4	13	1	1	0	0	3	4	0
						San Antonio (AA)	.306	59	245	31	75	6	19	17	67	12
						Lake Elsinore (A)	.286	74	297	47	85	5	35	19	83	11
1	Alex Dickerson	L-L	6-3	235	5/26/90	**SAN DIEGO**	**.257**	**84**	**253**	**39**	**65**	**10**	**37**	**26**	**44**	**5**
						El Paso (AAA)	.382	62	217	50	83	10	51	14	27	0
16	Travis Jankowski	L-R	6-2	185	6/15/91	**SAN DIEGO**	**.245**	**131**	**335**	**53**	**82**	**2**	**12**	**42**	**100**	**30**
70	Manuel Margot	R-R	5-11	180	9/28/94	**SAN DIEGO**	**.243**	**10**	**37**	**4**	**9**	**0**	**3**	**0**	**7**	**2**
						El Paso (AAA)	.304	124	517	98	157	6	55	36	64	30
71	Hunter Renfroe	R-R	6-1	220	1/28/92	**SAN DIEGO**	**.371**	**11**	**35**	**8**	**13**	**4**	**14**	**1**	**5**	**0**
						El Paso (AAA)	.306	133	533	95	163	30	105	22	115	5

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

CAL QUANTRILL, RHP

The Padres selected Quantrill with the eighth pick overall, taking a $4 million gamble that the righthander's surgically repaired pitching elbow will hold up. The son of former big leaguer Paul Quantrill, he was shut down after just three starts as a sophomore at Stanford with an elbow injury that required Tommy John surgery. Quantrill didn't pitch for Stanford in 2016, but he did throw multiple bullpen sessions for Padres scouts leading up to the draft. Quantrill threw 37 innings last summer, starting in the Arizona Rookie League and progressing through Low-A and High-A. He was 0–5 with a 5.11 ERA overall. The Padres are expected to closely monitor his innings in the next few seasons. They hope he can make it to the bigs by 2019.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Anderson Espinoza, RHP (19) Acquired in exchange for Drew Pomeranz, he struck out 100 in 108.1 innings in 24 starts combined in A-ball last season.

2. Manuel Margot, OF (22) One of the top defensive outfield prospects in baseball, Margot will begin the season as the Padres' starting center fielder.

3. Hunter Renfroe, OF (24) Former Mississippi State star is a tremendous physical specimen who needs to become more selective at the plate.

4. Fernando Tatis Jr., SS (18) The son of the former big-league third baseman was obtained in the James Shields deal. He hit .273 with 15 stolen bases between rookie league and short-season Class A.

5. Josh Naylor, 1B (19) He was part of the deal with the Marlins that also brought Carter Capps to San Diego. His raw power could have him up in the bigs by 2019.

6. Adrian Morejon, LHP (18) The Cuban phenom signed for $11 million as part of the team's impressive international class.

7. Javier Guerra, SS (21) Projected as a Gold Glove-caliber big leaguer, and his offense is getting better. Was among four prospects coming over in the Craig Kimbrel deal.

8. Chris Paddack, RHP (21) Acquired from the Marlins for Fernando Rodney, he went 2–0 with a 0.85 ERA and 71 strikeouts against just five walks in nine Class-A starts before having season-ending Tommy John surgery.

9. Eric Lauer, LHP (21) The third of San Diego's three first-round picks in 2016 (No. 25 overall), Lauer followed a strong junior season at Kent State with a solid pro debut.

10. Luis Urias, INF (19) Hit .330 with Class A Lake Elsinore before moving up to Class AAA El Paso for three games, where he had four hits, including a home run.

SAN FRANCISCO GIANTS

2017 PREDICTION
2nd
NL West

2016 RECORD
87-75

HOME: 45-36 **ROAD:** 42-39

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

TEAM INFO

AT&T PARK
Opened: 2000 **Capacity:** 41,503
Left: 339' **Center:** 399' **Right:** 309'
Tickets: 415-972-2000
sanfrancisco.giants.mlb.com

The Chicago Cubs had to come back from a 3-to-1 deficit against the Cleveland Indians to prevail as World Series champions, but the Giants understood this painful truth: They had the Cubs right where they wanted them, too. The Giants were three outs away from forcing a decisive Game 5 in their NL Division Series, with Johnny Cueto lined up to start at Wrigley Field and Madison Bumgarner available to reprise his role as a shutdown reliever.

But before the Giants could record those three outs in the ninth inning, manager Bruce Bochy desperately used five relievers without success as the Cubs stormed back from a three-run deficit to clinch the series. It marked a fitting end for a Giants team that boasted one of the league's best rotations and played nearly flawless defense yet also set a franchise record for blown saves. No great surprise, then: The Giants went all-in on a closer in the offseason, shelling out $60 million to sign All-Star Mark Melancon. They hope the rest of a young and talented relief crew will fall more neatly into line now that there's no uncertainty about who will get the ball in the ninth.

ROTATION Only the Cubs received more innings from their rotation than the Giants, whose 10 complete games led the major leagues. Bumgarner and Cueto combined to go the distance nine times, and despite an uneven middle of the season, Jeff Samardzija threw 203.1 innings as the Giants had three pitchers among the NL's top five in outs recorded. Bumgarner was a paragon of durability yet again, setting regular-season career highs in innings and strikeouts while also leading all major leaguers in pitches thrown. Midseason acquisition Matt Moore came up huge to help the Giants limp into the NL Wild Card Game, and like Bumgarner, he is on a team-friendly contract with options through 2019. Cueto can opt out of his deal after 2017, though. There's little reason to expect a serviceable season from Matt Cain in the final year of his contract, but he'll get a chance to reestablish himself in the spring while left-handed rookie Ty Blach pushes him. Prospect Tyler Beede should be ready to make an impact at some point this season.

BULLPEN Although Giants relievers combined to blow a franchise-record 30 saves in the regular season, the bullpen's 3.54 ERA was fifth best in the NL. For the most part, the damage was limited to the ninth inning, when Santiago Casilla faltered as the closer and the other two core members of the three-time World Series champion bullpen — Javier Lopez and Sergio Romo — showed their age. Melancon is a Giant "straight out of central casting," according to one front-office executive. Lefthander Will Smith, whom the Giants obtained at a steep prospect cost from Milwaukee at the Aug. 1 trade deadline, took awhile to settle in but has all the equipment to be one of the league's best lefty setup men. Cory Gearrin is a good matchup righthander — when he's not overused — and will replace Romo. Talented arms Hunter Strickland, Derek Law, Josh Osich and Steven Okert should be able to spend less time warming up and wondering, and let their talent shine.

MIDDLE INFIELD The Giants are golden up the middle. Second baseman Joe Panik and shortstop Brandon Crawford became the first pair of NL teammates since 2002 (the Cardinals' Fernando Viña and Edgar Renteria) to win Gold Gloves. Crawford didn't repeat as a Silver Slugger winner, but he led the Giants with 84 RBIs and led the NL with 11 triples. Panik was the hardest player to strike out in the majors (one per 11.19 plate appearances) but also had some of the worst luck, hitting .245 on balls in play — second lowest in the majors. Panik also struggled against lefties for the first time, leading to a move from the No. 2 spot to lower in the order.

CORNERS The Giants committed to first baseman Brandon Belt when they signed him to a multiyear contract in April. Then Belt, a longtime lightning rod among fans, finally fulfilled his potential while becoming the final ballot selection for the All-Star Game. Although Belt's 17 homers were a disappointment, no player gets cheated more by AT&T Park's spacious right-center death valley. The Giants won't receive much power at third base, either. Eduardo Núñez brings much-needed speed to the order, though. Like the player he replaced in August, Matt Duffy, Núñez was viewed as a utility player who overachieved into something more. He was a first-time All-Star with Minnesota last year and was leading the AL in steals when the Giants acquired him.

OUTFIELD For all their homegrown success, the Giants farm system hasn't yielded much in the way of outfielders. And last year's trio of Denard Span, Hunter Pence and Angel Pagan were no spring chickens. Pagan is gone, Span has lost a step and Pence had major hamstring surgery that forced him to miss chunks of time for the second consecutive season. NL third base coaches turned into windmills on base hits, knowing the Giants had little in the way of outfield

FANTASY TICKER

BLUE-CHIP BOPPER
C Buster Posey

HIGH-DIVIDEND HURLER
LHP Madison Bumgarner

BULL MARKET
OF Mac Williamson

BEAR MARKET
3B Eduardo Nunez

MEDICAL (IN)SECURITIES
OF Hunter Pence

IPO LHP Ty Blach

FUTURES MARKET RHP Tyler Beede

INSIDER TIP A finally healthy Matt Moore is poised for a career year — maybe not one of the magnitude forecast when he was a Ray, but good enough to be an SP3 on a championship fantasy staff.

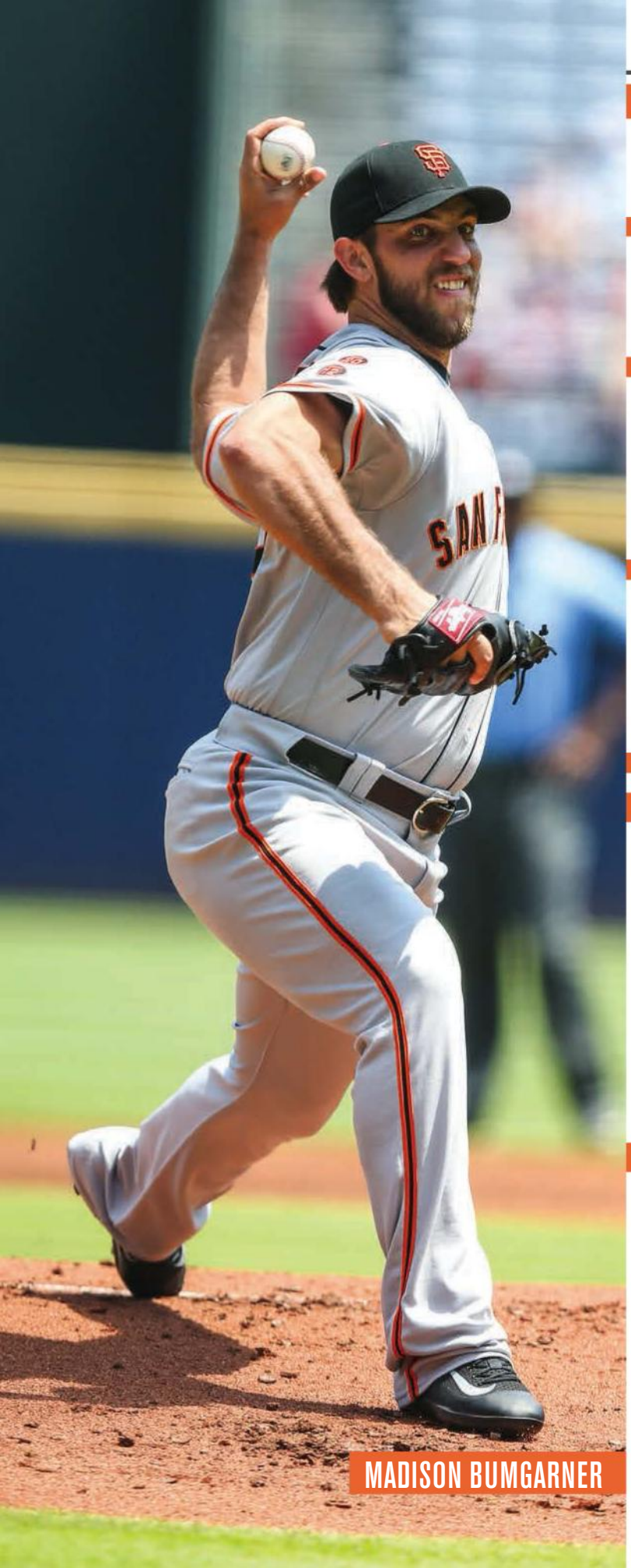
STATLINE

CAREER CAUGHT-STEALING %: ACTIVE PITCHERS

1. Johnny Cueto	**60.8**
2t. Wade Miley	58.7
2t. Chris Tillman	58.7
4. Doug Fister	52.4
5. Hisashi Iwakuma	48.9

(min. 750 IP)

Tom DiPace



➤ PROJECTED LINEUP

NEXT LEVEL

LINEUP

CF	Denard Span (L)
1B	Brandon Belt (L)
C	Buster Posey (R)
SS	**Brandon Crawford (L)**
RF	Hunter Pence (R)
2B	Joe Panik (L)
LF	Mac Williamson (R)
3B	Eduardo Núñez (S)

Brandon Crawford led the National League and all infielders with 21.3 runs saved, according to Ultimate Zone Rating. Defensive Runs Saved rated him as the second-best NL defender (19) behind Nolan Arenado (20).

BENCH

OF	**Jarrett Parker (L)**
C	Trevor Brown (R)
INF	Jimmy Rollins (S)
OF	Gorkys Hernandez (S)
INF	Conor Gillaspie (L)

Jarrett Parker crushed right-handed pitching (.289/.429/.467) but struggled to do much of anything against lefties (.108/.154/.216).

ROTATION

LHP	Madison Bumgarner
RHP	Johnny Cueto
LHP	Matt Moore
RHP	**Jeff Samardzija**
RHP	Matt Cain

Jeff Samardzija's ERA dropped from 4.96 to 3.81 thanks in part to getting more strikeouts (up to 20.1 percent from 17.9 percent) and more ground balls (up to 46.5 percent from 39.0 percent).

BULLPEN

RHP	Mark Melancon (Closer)
RHP	Cory Gearrin
RHP	George Kontos
LHP	Steven Okert
RHP	Derek Law
RHP	Hunter Strickland
LHP	**Will Smith**

Will Smith's 28.7 percent strikeout rate was actually his lowest in the last four seasons. His 31.8 percent rate during that stretch ranks 13th among relievers.

➤ SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE GIANTS

"Age is always going to be a factor for the Giants, because they love to go with veterans, and with that you have health issues. They're clearly short a run producer. If you're not gonna hit home runs, you need to have speed. They do have some guys who can run, but they don't manufacture a lot of runs and still tend to wait for homers. That said, their rotation ranks among the best you'll find, with Madison Bumgarner, Johnny Cueto and Matt Moore. Jeff Samardzija has his moments, too, but he's a teaser. He has the stuff to dominate and the athleticism to repeat his delivery, but at times he really struggles to do it. Mark Melancon makes them a lot better by settling the end of the game and allowing a pretty good group of setup guys to slot in behind him. That was their biggest problem last year, and they solved it with the right guy."

➤ STATISTICIAN

11	Number of playoff opponents the Giants had dispatched in a row since 2010 before losing to the Cubs in the NL Division Series.
10	Giants' consecutive victories in the postseason while facing elimination, a streak that ended against the Cubs.
0-62	The Giants' record when trailing after eight innings, the first time since 1960 that they went an entire season without a successful comeback in the ninth.
6	Number of losses in games the Giants led by four or more runs, more than they had in the previous two seasons combined.
29.1	Consecutive scoreless innings thrown by Johnny Cueto at AT&T Park from April 21 to May 23.
16-2	The Giants' record in Cueto's first 18 starts prior to the All-Star Game, where he started for the NL.

SCHEDULE

HOME AWAY

April

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2 ARI	3	4 ARI	5 ARI	6 ARI	7 SD	8 SD
9 SD	10 ARI	11 ARI	12 ARI	13 COL	14 COL	15 COL
16 COL	17	18 KC	19 KC	20	21 COL	22 COL
23 COL	24 LAD	25 LAD	26 LAD	27 LAD	28 SD	29 SD
30 SD						

May

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 LAD	2 LAD	3 LAD	4	5 CIN	6 CIN
7 CIN	8 NYM	9 NYM	10 NYM	11 CIN	12 CIN	13 CIN
14 CIN	15 LAD	16 LAD	17 LAD	18	19 STL	20 STL
21 STL	22 CHC	23 CHC	24 CHC	25 CHC	26 ATL	27 ATL
28 ATL	29 WAS	30 WAS	31 WAS			

June

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2 PHI	3 PHI
4 PHI	5 MIL	6 MIL	7 MIL	8 MIL	9 MIN	10 MIN
11 MIN	12	13 KC	14 KC	15 COL	16 COL	17 COL
18 COL	19 ATL	20 ATL	21 ATL	22 ATL	23 NYM	24 NYM
25 NYM	26 COL	27 COL	28 COL	29	30 PIT	

July

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1 PIT
2 PIT		4 DET	5 DET	6 DET	7 MIA	8 MIA
9 MIA	10	11	12	13	14 SD	15 SD
16 SD	17 CLE	18 CLE	19 CLE	20 SD	21 SD	22 SD
23 SD	24 PIT	25 PIT	26 PIT	27	28 LAD	29 LAD
30 LAD	31 OAK					

August

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 OAK	2 OAK	3 OAK	4 ARI	5 ARI
6 ARI	7 CHC	8 CHC	9 CHC	10	11 WAS	12 WAS
13 WAS	14 MIA	15 MIA	16 MIA	17 PHI	18 PHI	19 PHI
20 PHI	21 MIL	22 MIL	23 MIL	24	25 ARI	26 ARI
27 ARI	28 SD	29 SD	30 SD	31 STL		

September/ October

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 STL	2 STL
3 STL	4 COL	5 COL	6 COL	7	8 CWS	9 CWS
10 CWS	11 LAD	12 LAD	13 LAD	14	15 ARI	16 ARI
17 ARI	18	19 COL	20 COL	21	22 LAD	23 LAD
24 LAD	25 ARI	26 ARI	27 ARI	28	29 SD	30 SD
1 SD						

BRANDON CRAWFORD

arms. The Giants are hoping for health from Pence, whose power still plays in their ballpark, and they'll plan for a left field platoon between Jarrett Parker and Mac Williamson.

CATCHING Buster Posey checked off a rare unchecked box in his career when he ended Yadier Molina's eight-year run and won the Gold Glove Award. Posey's caught stealing percentage set a career high, and advanced metrics gave him tons of love for his ability to frame pitches. No wonder both he and the Giants refuse to entertain talk of moving him to a less stressful position.

BENCH October hero Conor Gillaspie's three-run homer off Jeurys Familia sent the Giants past the Mets in the NL Wild Card Game, and he also tripled on a 101-mph fastball from Aroldis Chapman in the NLDS. Gillaspie should be the club's top pinch hitter. Switch-hitter Jimmy Rollins will try to win a backup infield job over Kelby Tomlinson and Ehire Adrianza. With longtime backup outfielder Gregor Blanco gone, Gorkys Hernandez could play a valuable role. The Giants love what catcher Trevor Brown did as a rookie but signed Tim Federowicz to a minor-league contract to push for the backup job this spring.

MANAGEMENT Bochy lost no respect in the industry, and he's still headed to the Hall of Fame someday. But for once, a master of bullpen usage found himself totally "buffaloed," as he'd describe it, by the club's failures in the ninth inning. More troubling was the heart scare that caused him to miss a game in Miami. But Bochy, who had an unscheduled procedure in February 2015 to treat two arterial blockages, insisted he was fine and retains every bit of vigor to manage at least through the end of his contract in 2019.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Giants remain one of the league's most stable and successful franchises. They should receive plenty of quality innings from their rotation along with clean defensive games from a dynamic infield — a great recipe for getting leads, winning series and marching back to October.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

GOOD AND BAD Perhaps no team in MLB history had a more Jekyll-and-Hyde season than the 2016 Giants, who held the league's best record at the All-Star break (57–33) and posted the fourth-worst record (30–42) after it. The Giants had to win their final four regular-season games just to sneak into the postseason as the second Wild Card. The biggest difference: The Giants were 20–10 in one-run games prior to the break, but thanks mostly to an unreliable bullpen, they were 8–17 in one-run games after the break.

ON THE DEFENSIVE Defense wasn't the reason the Giants limped to the finish. They finished the regular season with baseball's top fielding percentage (.988), and their 72 errors were the fewest of any team. Only the Cubs and Astros were credited with more defensive runs saved. The Giants set a National League record when they played 17 errorless games from Aug. 15 to Sept. 2. And prior to Brandon Belt dropping a pop-up Aug. 14, they had played 12 consecutive without committing an error. That added up to an incredible 30-game stretch in which the Giants committed just one error.

HE'S GOOD Madison Bumgarner is coming off the best regular season of his career. His 251 strikeouts were the most in franchise history for a lefthander, breaking a record that Cy Seymour had held since 1898. He joined Juan Marichal, Christy Mathewson, Amos Rusie and Tim Lincecum as the only Giants to record 200 strikeouts in three consecutive seasons. He also became the youngest Giant since Mathewson to win his 100th game. Bumgarner left eight other games in line to win before the bullpen blew a lead.

SEVENTH HEAVEN Brandon Crawford authored one of the most remarkable offensive performances in baseball history on Aug. 8 at Miami, becoming just the sixth MLB player to collect seven hits in a game. Crawford finished 7-for-8 with five singles, a double and a triple. And the final hit, a line drive up the middle with two outs in the 14th inning, drove in the tiebreaking run in the Giants' 8–7 victory at Marlins Park. It was the first seven-hit game by a big leaguer since Rennie Stennett in 1975. And strangely enough, Stennett, who waited decades for someone to match his feat, happened to be watching the game before turning it off in the 10th inning to go to bed. Stennett, who lives in the Miami area, received an invitation from the Giants and congratulated Crawford in person the next day. "What a great moment for him," Stennett said.

Tom DiPace

GIANTS ROSTER

General Manager: Bobby Evans **Manager:** Bruce Bochy **Coaches:** Jose Alguacil (first base), Steve Decker (asst. hitting), Mark Gardner (bullpen), Hensley Meulens (hitting), Phil Nevin (third base), Dave Righetti (pitching), Ron Wotus (bench)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO
50	Ty Blach	R-L	6-2	200	10/20/90	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**1-0**	**1.06**	**4**	**2**	**0**	**17.0**	**8**	**5**	**10**
						Sacramento (AAA)	14-7	3.43	26	26	0	162.2	147	38	113
65	Ray Black	R-R	6-5	225	6/26/90	Richmond (AA)	1-4	4.88	35	0	6	31.1	17	32	53
52	Clayton Blackburn	L-R	6-3	230	1/6/93	Sacramento (AAA)	7-10	4.36	25	23	0	136.1	142	35	101
40	Madison Bumgarner	R-L	6-5	250	8/1/89	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**15-9**	**2.74**	**34**	**34**	**0**	**226.2**	**179**	**54**	**251**
18	Matt Cain	R-R	6-3	230	10/1/84	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**4-8**	**5.64**	**21**	**17**	**0**	**89.1**	**103**	**32**	**72**
						Sacramento (AAA)	1-1	5.06	2	2	0	10.2	11	4	6
						San Jose (A)	0-1	20.25	1	1	0	4.0	10	3	2
						AZL Giants (R)	0-0	5.40	1	1	0	3.1	3	0	6
73	Kyle Crick	L-R	6-4	220	11/30/92	Richmond (AA)	4-11	5.04	23	23	0	109.0	110	67	86
47	Johnny Cueto	R-R	5-11	220	2/15/86	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**18-5**	**2.79**	**32**	**32**	**0**	**219.2**	**195**	**45**	**198**
	Ian Gardeck	R-R	6-2	220	11/21/90	Injured — Missed Season									
62	Cory Gearrin	R-R	6-3	200	4/14/86	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**3-2**	**4.28**	**56**	**0**	**3**	**48.1**	**42**	**14**	**45**
						Sacramento (AAA)	0-0	1.13	8	0	0	8.0	5	2	9
67	Joan Gregorio	R-R	6-7	180	1/12/92	Sacramento (AAA)	6-8	5.28	21	21	0	107.1	112	43	122
						Richmond (AA)	0-2	2.33	5	5	0	27.0	15	6	30
	Chase Johnson	R-R	6-3	190	1/9/92	Richmond (AA)	1-4	3.27	24	7	5	52.1	47	18	37
70	George Kontos	R-R	6-3	215	6/12/85	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**3-2**	**2.53**	**57**	**0**	**0**	**53.1**	**42**	**20**	**35**
						Sacramento (AAA)	0-0	2.45	4	0	0	3.2	5	0	2
64	Derek Law	R-R	6-2	210	9/14/90	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**4-2**	**2.13**	**61**	**0**	**1**	**55.0**	**44**	**9**	**50**
						Sacramento (AAA)	0-0	0.00	3	0	0	3.0	1	1	2
41	Mark Melancon	R-R	6-2	210	3/28/85	**PITTSBURGH**	**1-1**	**1.51**	**45**	**0**	**30**	**41.2**	**31**	**9**	**38**
						WASHINGTON	**1-1**	**1.82**	**30**	**0**	**17**	**29.2**	**21**	**3**	**27**
45	Matt Moore	L-L	6-3	210	6/18/89	**TAMPA BAY**	**7-7**	**4.08**	**21**	**21**	**0**	**130.0**	**125**	**40**	**109**
						SAN FRANCISCO	**6-5**	**4.08**	**12**	**12**	**0**	**68.1**	**59**	**32**	**69**
	Reyes Moronta	R-R	6-0	175	1/6/93	San Jose (A)	0-3	2.59	60	0	14	59.0	43	20	93
48	Steven Okert	L-L	6-3	210	7/9/91	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**0-0**	**3.21**	**16**	**0**	**0**	**14.0**	**14**	**4**	**14**
						Sacramento (AAA)	4-3	3.80	41	0	3	47.1	53	11	60
61	Josh Osich	L-L	6-2	230	9/3/88	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**1-3**	**4.71**	**59**	**0**	**0**	**36.1**	**31**	**19**	**25**
						Sacramento (AAA)	0-0	1.29	7	0	0	7.0	6	2	8
						Richmond (AA)	0-1	18.00	2	0	0	1.0	1	4	2
29	Jeff Samardzija	R-R	6-5	225	1/23/85	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**12-11**	**3.81**	**32**	**32**	**0**	**203.1**	**190**	**54**	**167**
	Dan Slania	R-R	6-5	275	5/24/92	Sacramento (AAA)	2-0	1.38	2	2	0	13.0	8	4	14
						Richmond (AA)	7-6	2.50	27	10	0	82.2	68	22	79
						San Jose (A)	2-2	5.25	5	4	0	24.0	27	9	18
13	Will Smith	R-L	6-5	265	7/10/89	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**1-1**	**2.95**	**26**	**0**	**0**	**18.1**	**13**	**9**	**26**
						Biloxi (AA)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.0	0	0	1
						MILWAUKEE	1-3	3.68	27	0	0	22.0	18	9	22
						Brevard (A)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	3.0	1	0	4
68	Chris Stratton	R-R	6-3	190	8/22/90	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**1-0**	**3.60**	**7**	**0**	**0**	**10.0**	**11**	**5**	**6**
						Sacramento (AAA)	12-6	3.87	21	20	0	125.2	120	39	103
60	Hunter Strickland	R-R	6-4	220	9/24/88	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**3-3**	**3.10**	**72**	**0**	**3**	**61.0**	**50**	**19**	**57**
56	Albert Suarez	R-R	6-3	235	10/8/89	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**3-5**	**4.29**	**22**	**12**	**0**	**84.0**	**84**	**26**	**54**
						Sacramento (AAA)	4-3	4.34	9	7	0	45.2	46	14	39

No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
14	Trevor Brown	R-R	6-2	195	11/15/91	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**.237**	**75**	**173**	**17**	**41**	**5**	**19**	**10**	**39**	**0**
28	Buster Posey	R-R	6-1	215	3/27/87	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**.288**	**146**	**539**	**82**	**155**	**14**	**80**	**64**	**68**	**6**

No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
1	Ehire Adrianza	S-R	6-1	170	8/21/89	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**.254**	**40**	**63**	**3**	**16**	**2**	**7**	**2**	**13**	**0**
						Sacramento (AAA)	.257	8	35	6	9	1	3	2	4	1
						San Jose (A)	.333	9	33	8	11	5	11	2	4	0
9	Brandon Belt	L-L	6-5	220	4/20/88	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**.275**	**156**	**542**	**77**	**149**	**17**	**82**	**104**	**148**	**0**
	Orlando Calixte	R-R	5-11	180	2/3/92	Omaha (AAA)	.265	88	332	48	88	9	29	28	68	5
						NW Arkansas (AA)	.295	38	139	26	41	2	14	9	31	14
35	Brandon Crawford	L-R	6-2	215	1/21/87	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**.275**	**155**	**553**	**67**	**152**	**12**	**84**	**57**	**115**	**7**
21	Conor Gillaspie	L-R	6-1	195	7/18/87	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**.262**	**101**	**191**	**24**	**50**	**6**	**25**	**12**	**28**	**1**
						Sacramento (AAA)	.314	12	51	6	16	1	4	1	6	1
	Miguel Gomez	S-R	5-10	185	12/17/92	San Jose (A)	.267	43	172	25	46	9	24	8	28	1
						Augusta (A)	.371	66	267	41	99	8	43	12	25	3
10	Eduardo Núñez	R-R	6-0	195	6/15/87	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**.269**	**50**	**182**	**24**	**49**	**4**	**20**	**14**	**30**	**13**
						MINNESOTA	**.296**	**91**	**371**	**49**	**110**	**12**	**47**	**15**	**58**	**27**
12	Joe Panik	L-R	6-1	190	10/30/90	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**.239**	**127**	**464**	**67**	**111**	**10**	**62**	**50**	**47**	**5**
						Sacramento (AAA)	.231	4	13	2	3	0	0	1	0	0
	Jimmy Rollins	S-R	5-7	175	11/27/78	**CHICAGO AL**	**.221**	**41**	**149**	**25**	**33**	**2**	**8**	**16**	**33**	**5**
37	Kelby Tomlinson	R-R	6-3	180	6/16/90	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**.292**	**52**	**106**	**13**	**31**	**0**	**6**	**12**	**18**	**5**
						Sacramento (AAA)	.286	49	185	28	53	0	20	22	26	12
						San Jose (A)	.250	2	8	0	2	0	1	0	1	0

No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2016 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
66	Gorkys Hernandez	R-R	6-1	190	9/7/87	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**.259**	**26**	**54**	**7**	**14**	**2**	**4**	**3**	**11**	**0**
						Sacramento (AAA)	.302	116	437	74	132	8	51	52	77	20
6	Jarrett Parker	L-L	6-4	210	1/1/89	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**.236**	**63**	**127**	**22**	**30**	**5**	**14**	**19**	**44**	**0**
						Sacramento (AAA)	.273	53	194	44	53	16	35	26	66	1
8	Hunter Pence	R-R	6-4	220	4/13/83	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**.289**	**106**	**395**	**58**	**114**	**13**	**57**	**43**	**95**	**1**
						Sacramento (AAA)	.417	7	24	6	10	3	7	0	3	0
2	Denard Span	L-L	6-0	210	2/27/84	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**.266**	**143**	**572**	**70**	**152**	**11**	**53**	**53**	**79**	**12**
51	Mac Williamson	R-R	6-4	240	7/15/90	**SAN FRANCISCO**	**.223**	**54**	**112**	**14**	**25**	**6**	**15**	**13**	**35**	**0**
						Sacramento (AAA)	.269	54	208	35	56	11	42	12	53	2

FARM SYSTEM

2016 Top Draft Pick

BRYAN REYNOLDS, OF

The Giants sacrificed their first-round pick to sign Jeff Samardzija, so they were thrilled when Reynolds — a first-round talent from Vanderbilt — remained on the board for them to snag with the 59th overall selection. A switch-hitter and five-tool talent, Reynolds was expected to go at the back end of the first round but fell due to some concerns about a lack of consistent contact in his junior season. But the Giants had solid reports on him from the Cape Cod League and believe he has the athleticism to become a defensive asset in center field. Reynolds had a promising pro debut, hitting .313 with six home runs in 56 games on two levels and then going 4-for-12 with a home run in three games as a ringer in the Cal League playoffs for Single-A San Jose, where he'll likely start the 2017 season.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS

1. Tyler Beede, RHP (23) Two-time first-round pick sacrificed velocity to work on sinker-slider approach in low minors, but upper-90s heat returned while he won ERA title (2.81) for Double-A Richmond.

2. Christian Arroyo, 3B (21) Numbers (.274, three HRs) didn't impress at Double-A Richmond, but pure hitter from Florida competed well as one of youngest players in league.

3. Sam Coonrod, RHP (24) Former fifth-rounder from Southern Illinois matched a premium fastball with solid control while dominating (1.98 ERA) at Single-A San Jose.

4. Chris Shaw, 1B (23) Boston College slugger launched 21 over two levels last season and has the rare left-handed power that could translate at AT&T Park.

5. Aramis Garcia, C (24) Athletic defender whose bat shouldn't hold him back, either. Lost time after fracturing his cheekbone, but performed well in Arizona Fall League.

6. Steven Duggar, OF (23) Tooled-up sixth-rounder from 2015 draft is finally figuring out how to translate his skills.

7. Ty Blach, LHP (26) Strike thrower shaved his Triple-A ERA from 4.46 to 3.43, then showed extreme poise in September to help Giants make postseason.

8. Austin Slater, OF (24) Did well in conversion from infield to left field, and combination of contact and on-base skills should earn him a big-league promotion soon.

9. Andrew Suarez, LHP (24) Second-round pick out of Miami in 2015 has the arm angle and assortment of pitches to succeed against big-league lineups.

10. Reyes Moronta, RHP (23) The 93 strikeouts in 59 relief innings were impressive enough, and opponents shook their heads as Moronta hit 100 mph with regularity.

Fantasy *Baseball*

BY BRUCE HERMAN

MIKE TROUT

About the Grades

Letter grades are based on 2017 projections of performance and playing time relative to the pool of potential major-league regulars. They are intended to provide a quick visual aid for assessing category value in draft/auction planning and participation. The grades are significantly weighted relative to the position played, so grades across positions are not necessarily equal in absolute value. Similarly, there can be variances within the same grade (especially within the "C" designation), so a mere averaging of grades does not determine a player's ranking, which also takes into account such factors as consistency, predictability, hidden upside and injury risk. Note also that ratings are not provided for relief pitchers, whose rankings are tied to a very high degree on saves and job security alone.

- Batting stats are expressed AVG-HR-RBIs-R-SB.
- Pitching stats are expressed W-ERA-SO-WHIP.

CARLOS CORREA

Kershaw: Tom DiPace; Correa, Betts, Trout: AP Images

MOOKIE BETTS

CLAYTON KERSHAW

Fantasy Baseball's Top 100

1. Mike Trout, Angels
2. Mookie Betts, Red Sox
3. Clayton Kershaw, Dodgers
4. Jose Altuve, Astros
5. Nolan Arenado, Rockies
6. Paul Goldschmidt, Diamondbacks
7. Kris Bryant, Cubs
8. Carlos Correa, Astros
9. Max Scherzer, Nationals
10. Buster Posey, Giants
11. Miguel Cabrera, Tigers
12. Josh Donaldson, Blue Jays
13. Bryce Harper, Nationals
14. Madison Bumgarner, Giants
15. Xander Bogaerts, Red Sox
16. Robinson Cano, Mariners
17. Chris Sale, Red Sox
18. Corey Seager, Dodgers
19. Christian Yelich, Marlins
20. Anthony Rizzo, Cubs
21. Ryan Braun, Brewers
22. Joey Votto, Reds
23. Corey Kluber, Indians
24. Francisco Lindor, Indians
25. Noah Syndergaard, Mets
26. David Price, Red Sox
27. Jonathan Lucroy, Rangers
28. Charlie Blackmon, Rockies
29. Manny Machado, Orioles
30. Trea Turner, Nationals
31. Freddie Freeman, Braves
32. Jon Lester, Cubs
33. Jake Arrieta, Cubs
34. Johnny Cueto, Giants
35. Zach Britton, Orioles
35. Gregory Polanco, Pirates
36. Justin Verlander, Tigers
37. George Springer, Astros
38. Carlos Gonzalez, Rockies
39. Daniel Murphy, Nationals
40. Kenley Jansen, Dodgers
41. Stephen Piscotty, Cardinals
42. Starling Marte, Pirates
42. Edwin Encarnacion, Indians
43. Jose Abreu, White Sox
44. Andrew McCutchen, Pirates
45. A.J. Pollock, Diamondbacks
46. Giancarlo Stanton, Marlins
47. Nelson Cruz, Mariners
48. Aroldis Chapman, Yankees
49. Craig Kimbrel, Red Sox
50. Carlos Martinez, Cardinals
51. Yu Darvish, Rangers
52. DJ LeMahieu, Rockies
53. Brian Dozier, Twins
54. Dee Gordon, Marlins
55. Eric Hosmer, Royals
56. Ian Desmond, Rockies
57. Mark Melancon, Giants
58. Julio Teheran, Braves
59. Stephen Strasburg, Nationals
60. Kyle Seager, Mariners
61. Gary Sanchez, Yankees
62. J.D. Martinez, Tigers
63. Anthony Rendon, Nationals
64. Masahiro Tanaka, Yankees
65. Kyle Hendricks, Cubs
66. Odubel Herrera, Phillies
67. Yoenis Cespedes, Mets
68. Rougned Odor, Rangers
69. Jacob deGrom, Mets
70. Rick Porcello, Red Sox
71. Cole Hamels, Rangers
72. Wil Myers, Padres
73. Chris Davis, Orioles
74. Justin Upton, Tigers
75. Evan Longoria, Rays
76. Adrian Beltre, Rangers
77. Trevor Story, Rockies
78. Jean Segura, Diamondbacks
79. Aaron Sanchez, Blue Jays
80. Kendrys Morales, Blue Jays
81. Jason Kipnis, Indians
82. Hanley Ramirez, Red Sox
83. Gerrit Cole, Pirates
84. Chris Archer, Rays
85. Zack Greinke, Diamondbacks
86. Lorenzo Cain, Royals
87. Jose Ramirez, Indians
88. Alex Bregman, Astros
89. Dustin Pedroia, Red Sox
90. Kevin Kiermaier, Rays
91. Mark Trumbo, Free Agent
92. Billy Hamilton, Reds
93. Jonathan Villar, Brewers
94. Todd Frazier, White Sox
95. Salvador Perez, Royals
96. Adam Jones, Orioles
97. Dallas Keuchel, Astros
98. Maikel Franco, Phillies
99. Roberto Osuna, Blue Jays
100. Matt Harvey, Mets

Catchers

BUSTER POSEY

TIER 1

1. BUSTER POSEY, GIANTS

Catchers are like PATs in football — not worth much in points, but compulsory. Posey is the "field goal" of the group. He has more hits, RBIs and runs scored than any of them over the last five years, and it's not close. (Brian McCann edges him in homers.) News you can't use: The last catcher to lead the Giants in runs before Buster with 82 in 2016 was Buck Ewing in 1883.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
A	B	B	A	F

2. JONATHAN LUCROY, RANGERS

Lucroy was slightly better than Posey last year, leading the position with 24 HRs and 81 RBIs. His power spiked after joining Texas, where he went deep 11 times in only 47 games. He's Buster's near-equal in mixed leagues, but not quite as valuable in AL-only formats, where there are several other viable backstop options.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	C	B	B	F

TIER 2

3. GARY SANCHEZ, YANKEES

Sanchez hit 20 homers in his first 189 at-bats. Mark McGwire needed only 178, but all of the other 19,000 guys to play the game (give or take a Moonlight Graham) required more. The 24-year-old sensation won't sustain that Ruthian pace, of course — but maybe a Benchian or Fiskian one.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	A	B	F

4. SALVADOR PEREZ, ROYALS

Perez topped out at 22 home runs in 2016, keeping his streak intact of elevating totals in all six years of his career. On the flip side, his batting averages have declined in lockstep — to .247. His runs (55ish) and RBIs (70ish) settle within well-defined ranges.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	B	B	F

TIER 3

5. WILLSON CONTRERAS, CUBS

Nearly a century ago there was a dude named Kid Willson who batted twice for the White Sox, then didn't play in the majors again for nine years. Contreras, another player with an extraneous "l," has a much brighter future. After smacking .339 at the two highest rungs of the system, his 12 homers in just 76 games for Chicago were a career best at any level. Next Cub up.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	C	C	F

6. J.T. REALMUTO, MARLINS

Of the 17 players in the majors who struck out 100 times with as few as 28 walks in 2016, the indiscriminate Realmuto's .303 AVG was the second-highest to Starling Marte's .311. That's what a .357 batting average on balls in play (BAbip) will do. With 11 and 12, respectively, he also became one of three active catchers (Russell Martin, Yadier Molina) to put a double-digit HR/SB season on his résumé.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	C	C	D

7. RUSSELL MARTIN, BLUE JAYS

After striking out in 46.3% of his April plate appearances and looking up enviously at Mario Mendoza into the second week of June, Martin regrouped to finish at a career-representative .231-20-74-62-2. At 34, he's not a candidate to move beyond that.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	C	B	B	F

8. EVAN GATTIS, ASTROS

The Astros appear to have gashed the playing time of their leading home run hitter. Expect Gattis to share time at catcher, left and DH — but to settle closer to his 22 pokes of 2014 than his 32 last year.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	C	B	B	F

9. YASMANI GRANDAL, DODGERS

Grandal's 27 HRs were the fifth most ever by a catcher in a season of fewer than 400 at-bats. The roller-coaster concavities of his batting average include 4-for-84 to end 2015, and a 17-for-121 swoon last year that was immediately followed by a 5-for-5, 3-HR game. Bust out the Dramamine.

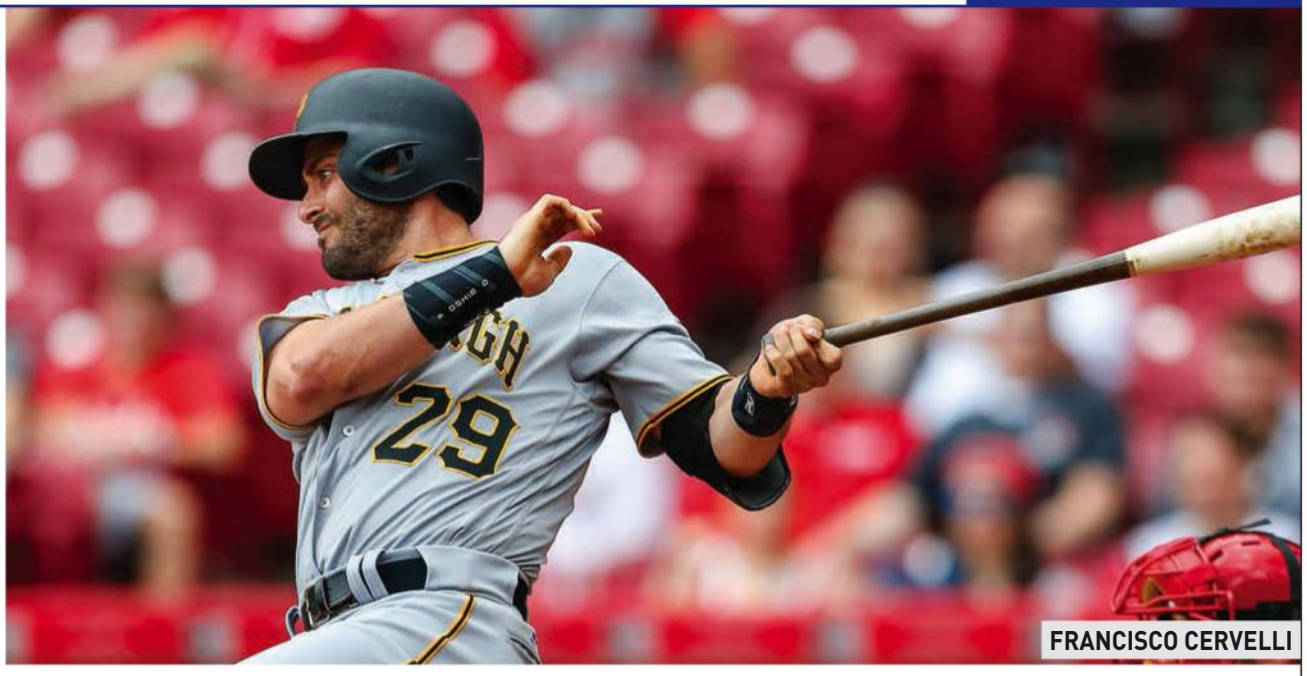
AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
F	C	A	B	F

10. MATT WIETERS, FREE AGENT

Wieters has made a satisfactory recovery from Tommy John surgery. If he can get back to catching 130 games (117 last year), an approximation of his 2011-13 norm of .249-22-77-66-2 is doable.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	B	B	F

Posey: Tom DiPace; Cervelli: AP Images


FRANCISCO CERVELLI

11. BRIAN MCCANN, ASTROS

He's been an automatic 20-homer man for nearly a decade, but McCann is moving from a left-handed hitter's bandbox to one of the most challenging parks for portside pull-power hitters. Yankee Stadium has served up 46 of his 69 since 2014.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	C	B	B	F

12. STEPHEN VOGT, ATHLETICS

Vogt makes All-Star teams (2015 and 2016), then puts away his bat (.643 OPS after the break, .820 before). His most likely role this year is to face righthanders as a combination catcher/DH.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	C	C	F

13. FRANCISCO CERVELLI, PIRATES

Cervelli is a safe haven at this position because he doesn't menace your team's batting average. His career mark of .280 is the fourth highest (1,500+ PAs) of players who are expected to be starting catchers in 2017.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	C	F	D	F

14. YADIER MOLINA, CARDINALS

The Molina epoch is soon to begin winding down in St. Louis as the Cardinals break in superb prospect Carson Kelly. Yadi is still a tough out at age 34 – although a BAbip nearly 40 points above his previous career norm was responsible for his .307 AVG last year.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	D	D	C	F

15. WELINGTON CASTILLO, ORIOLES

His power is fringe-plus for the position and he has a knack for driving in runs, but the beef with Welington is that he strikes out too much, walks too little and requires at least three singles to score him from first.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	D	C	B	F

16. TOM MURPHY, ROCKIES

One can never go wrong drafting a Rockie standing anywhere near a bat rack, and the rookie Murphy is primed for the starting lineup. He's produced the longball at every stop up the ladder, including eight in 88 plate appearances for Colorado.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	D	B	C	F

17. TRAVIS D'ARNAUD, METS

We're looking into the rumor that he's legally changed his name to d'Isabled. If he can strap on the gear even 100 times, he's worth 15 HRs while holding his own in three other areas.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	D	C	D	F

TIER 4

18. SANDY LEON, RED SOX

Leon either has osmosed Ted Williams' *The Science of Hitting* or is an exemplar of the infinite monkey theorem. After brandishing a .455 AVG in the first half that was a record for anyone with at least 50 at-bats, he finished at .310.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	D	D	D	F

19. DEREK NORRIS, NATIONALS

Norris is a long-swinging opportunist who's walked into 14 homers each of the past two years, but whose .186 AVG of 2016 was .023 lower than any other player who batted at least 400 times.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
F	C	C	C	F

20. JAMES MCCANN, TIGERS

McCann disappointed at .221-12-48-31-0, but 11 of his 12 home runs traveled at least 400 feet. Curiously, like so many catchers, he only knows a ball from a strike when he's *behind* the plate.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	D	C	C	F

21. Devin Mesoraco, Reds
22. Mike Zunino, Mariners
23. Yan Gomes, Indians
24. Tucker Barnhart, Reds
25. Cameron Rupp, Phillies
26. Wilson Ramos, Rays
27. Jason Castro, Twins
28. Chris Herrmann, Diamondbacks
29. Bruce Maxwell, Athletics
30. Austin Hedges, Padres

TIER 5

31. Andrew Susac, Brewers
32. Geovany Soto, Free Agent
33. Tyler Flowers, Braves
34. Kurt Suzuki, Free Agent
35. Roberto Perez, Indians
36. Jett Bandy, Brewers
37. Carlos Ruiz, Mariners
38. Jorge Alfaro, Phillies
39. Miguel Montero, Cubs
40. Blake Swihart, Red Sox

First Basemen

PAUL GOLDSCHMIDT

TIER 1

1. PAUL GOLDSCHMIDT, DIAMONDBACKS

As is customary (even though he fell a smidge short of his usual .300-30-100 in all three columns), Goldy locks up the top slot among first basemen. He more than made up for it with an astonishing — but likely not-to-be-repeated — 32 stolen bases. Paul leads the NL with 15 HR+SB games since 2012, which is not something associated with this position since the heyday of Jeff Bagwell.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
A	A	B	A	B

2. MIGUEL CABRERA, TIGERS

After Cabrera totaled only 43 HRs in 2014-15, our alert last spring that he might whack 40 was close. Thanks to a .358-20-55-42-0 rampage in his last 65 games, he finished with 38 and confirmed his rep as the planet's best hitter. Seems like he should be older than 33, doesn't it? Still on the periphery of his prime.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
A	B	A	A	F

TIER 2

3. ANTHONY RIZZO, CUBS

Rizzo had the same average and more RBIs, yet fewer than half the MVP votes, of teammate Kris Bryant. In fantasy currency, he would have been just as valuable had his SBs not plummeted from 17 to three. Though Anthony is only 27, his Triple Crown upside is probably not much higher than his career bests of .292-32-109 in 2016.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	B	A	A	D

4. JOEY VOTTO, REDS

While settling for 35 fewer walks in 2016 than in '15, Votto duplicated his 29 home runs, knocked in 17 more runs (97) and hiked his average 12 points compared to the year before — maybe, just maybe, validating the complaints of roto-police that he was too passive. Either way, from Memorial Day on, he was Lou Gehrig: .377-22-71-78-7 in 108 games.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
A	A	B	B	F

5. FREDDIE FREEMAN, BRAVES

Overdue for the type of season he had in 2016, Freeman's .302-34-91-102-6 campaign was particularly remarkable considering his lineup "protection" consisted of Adonis Garcia and two months of Matt Kemp. He's now led the majors in foul balls in multiple seasons (602 last year), so maybe he's on to something.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	B	B	B	F

6. EDWIN ENCARNACION, INDIANS

Forty-two homers, 127 RBIs and 99 runs equaled or exceeded Double-E's career highs, with the only hint of concession to his 34 years being his highest strikeout rate since his pre-colossus days of 2009. Neutral batting averages are all that keep him out of Tier 1.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	B	A	A	F

7. JOSE ABREU, WHITE SOX

A late 25-game spurt of 10 HRs and 30 RBIs allowed Abreu to match Joe DiMaggio and Albert Pujols as the only players in history to go at least .290-25-100 in each of their first three seasons. Somehow, Abreu scored only 67 times last year, and the White Sox aren't doing him any favors with their roster-gutting.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	B	B	A	F

TIER 3

8. ERIC HOSMER, ROYALS

Personal highs of 25 HRs, 104 RBIs and a 20.3 swinging strike percentage cost Hosmer in the batting average department (.266, down from .297 in 2015). He is, however, a good enough hitter and at the ideal age (27) to put everything together for a signature season — if the Kendrys Morales-less Royals can find some pop to slot behind him in the lineup.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	B	C	A	C

9. IAN DESMOND, ROCKIES

By reverting back to his career SO% of 23.6 instead of his whiffalicious 2015 figure of 29.2, Desmond staged his best year since 2012, going .285-22-86-107-21. Now that he's cavorting in Coors Field, where his OPS is 1.016 in 23 games, he's sure to take things up another notch. More uncertain is his position; he's never played first before, and a return to the outfield is possible.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	B	B	B	B

Tom DiPace

10. WIL MYERS, PADRES

A 28/28 man! Myers was a 27/16 man for three *combined* seasons prior to last year, when he stayed healthy for a change and new manager Andy Green became the wings beneath his feet. Not that we're fully convinced. The "Thril" was gone after the All-Star break: .697 OPS vs. .873 before it.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	B	B	B	B

11. CHRIS DAVIS, ORIOLES

Davis' 197 HRs lead the pack since 2012. His 968 strikeouts are the second most in any five-year period in the history of baseball. (Thank you, Mark Reynolds.) His AVGs snake around at the whim of where the holes happen to be in the scarcely half of his plate appearances that are not of three-true-outcome ilk: .270, .286, .196, .262, .221.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
F	A	A	B	F

12. BRANDON BELT, GIANTS

Belt's BB% rocketed from 10.1 to 15.9 with no appreciable effect on his fantasy stats. Now 29, he probably is what he is, as opposed to what we thought he'd be: solid in four categories without the bona fide impact you'd want from a first baseman in a perfect world.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	B	C	B	F

13. MATT CARPENTER, CARDINALS

Carpenter's roto-worth has diminished as he's crisscrossed the diamond from second base to third to first. What we have now is a mid-tier player with a high reliability quotient whose utility is enhanced by qualification at all of those positions and an impending move from first to third in the lineup.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	B	C	C	F

14. BRAD MILLER, RAYS

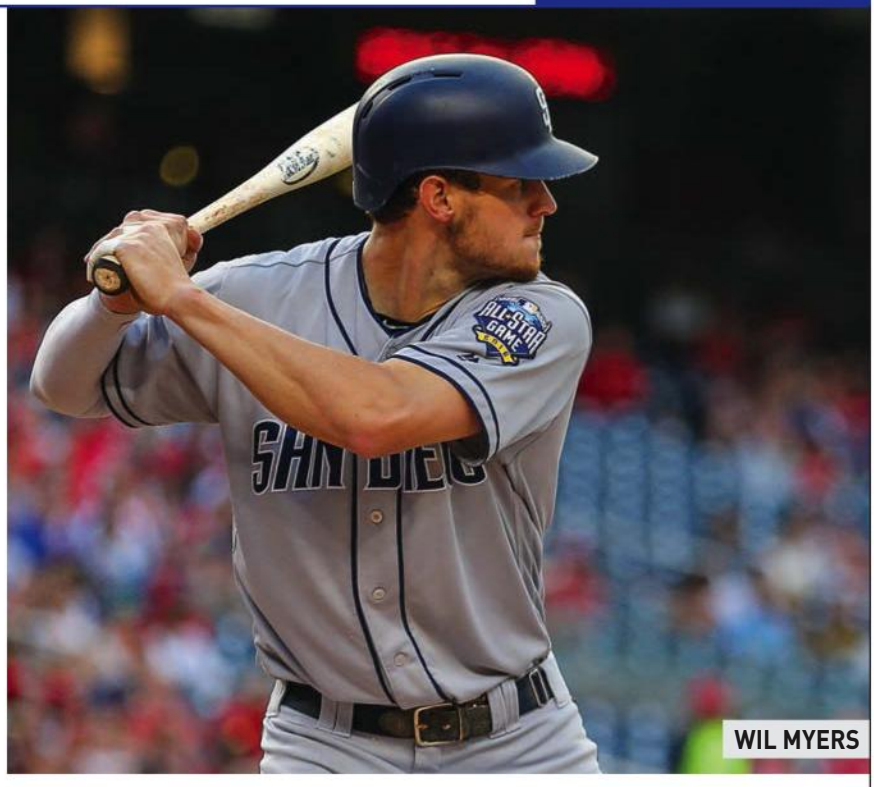
We pronounced Miller a "key sleeper" last year, but 30 homers — climbing from 164th in the game to 32nd? We're not that prescient. Most of it is real, if not entirely realistic for 2017. His residual shortstop qualification adds appeal.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	B	C	B	D

15. ADRIAN GONZALEZ, DODGERS

His skills may be in leisurely decline, but Gonzalez is the only player with 90+ RBIs every season of last decade, and he's never been on the DL. These days he's more streaky than steady and more dangerous than dreaded.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	C	C	B	F



WIL MYERS

TIER 4

16. CHRIS CARTER, FREE AGENT

The unceremonious release of the NL home run king by the Brewers illustrates the Carter conundrum: No one in history who's played fewer than 700 games has hit as many, and only Mark McGwire has a higher percentage of hits that have left the yard (35.9 to 30.1) — but Chris' .221 AVG since 2012 is .017 lower than any other player with 2,500+ plate appearances.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
F	C	A	B	F

17. C.J. CRON, ANGELS

Cron will never be a star, but he's made palpable progress annually to the point where he's a legitimate you-can-win-with-him player. A broken hand limited him to 116 games and cost him something close to a 25-HR/80-RBI season.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	C	B	F

18. GREG BIRD, YANKEES

Throw-down time: Bird is a better prospect than his much more ballyhooed teammate Aaron Judge. He's poised to replace Mark Teixeira after missing 2016 with a torn labrum, and his 11 HRs in only 46 games two years back might be easily overlooked at your draft.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	C	C	B	F

19. MIKE NAPOLI, FREE AGENT

Napoli's 34-HR/101-RBI tandem was almost precisely what he cobbled together the previous two years combined. At 35, though, his compass is pointing south.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
F	B	C	B	F

20. DANNY VALENCIA, MARINERS

Valencia resuscitated his career with a .798 OPS since 2013. Last year, he led the AL with a 28.5 line drive percentage. There's a path to playing time at first, left and DH.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	C	C	C	F

21. Lucas Duda, Mets
22. Justin Bour, Marlins
23. Ryan Zimmerman, Nationals
24. Mitch Moreland, Red Sox
25. Tommy Joseph, Phillies
26. Eric Thames, Brewers
27. Brandon Moss, Free Agent
28. Yonder Alonso, Athletics
29. Adam Lind, Free Agent
30. Josh Bell, Pirates
31. Yuli Gurriel, Astros
32. Joe Mauer, Twins
33. Justin Smoak, Blue Jays

TIER 5

34. Ryan Howard, Free Agent
35. Ryan Rua, Rangers
36. Matt Adams, Cardinals
37. Dan Vogelbach, Mariners
38. David Freese, Angels
39. Steve Pearce, Blue Jays
40. Cody Bellinger, Dodgers

Second Basemen

JOSE ALTUVE

TIER 1

1. JOSE ALTUVE, ASTROS

It used to be funny that an "Altuve" was a 55-inch unit of measurement; now it takes like three average players to equal an Altuve on a fantasy squad. No player — *no* player — in the history of baseball has ever equaled all of his five roto categories from 2014-16 in any three-year span. Of those who matched four, his batting average beats any (Joe Morgan, 1974-76) by 18 points.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
A	A	B	B	A

2. ROBINSON CANO, MARINERS

The only other second sacker in the game's annals with a line to match Cano's .298-29-103 in 2016 was Rogers Hornsby. (Of course, Rajah's batting averages the three times he did it were .403, .401 and .380.) Robbie's still about 30 stolen bases short of an Altuve, though.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	A	A	A	F

TIER 2

3. DANIEL MURPHY, NATIONALS

Only Big Papi and Mike Trout out-OPS'd Murphy's .985, which was the fourth-highest figure of the past eight decades posted by a second baseman. Murphy lost the batting title by only .0013, and he led the majors with a 21.70 RBI%. As transformational as he's made his career, that type of history rarely repeats for a player of his moderate established value.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
A	B	B	B	F

4. DJ LEMAHIEU, ROCKIES

When the Cubs traded LeMahieu in 2011, they got back Ian Stewart and Casey Weathers. Five years hence, the Rox had a batting champ (.348). We see LeMahieu reverting to nearer .300, but he's our "Brad Miller" power pick to click for 2017.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
A	B	B	C	C

5. BRIAN DOZIER, TWINS

Batting .202 on June 1, Dozier rapped .369 for that month, muddled his way through July, then went Full Barry Bonds with 23 HRs in his next 48 games. Manager Paul Molitor's refusal to move him out of the cleanup spot cost him at least 20 RBIs. Brian would steal a lot more bases if he'd just stop at first more often.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	A	A	B	C

6. DEE GORDON, MARLINS

Prior to his 80-game PED-forced vacation from the game, Gordon was the reigning NL batting king (.333) and two-time defending stolen-base titlist (64, 58). In today's seventh commandment climate (thou shalt not steal), Gordon's high volume of thievery means that you can draft Dee and a dozen Pablo Sandovals and still finish respectably in the category.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	B	F	D	A

AP Images

ROUGNED ODOR

7. ROUGNED ODOR, RANGERS
Odor joined the second base slugging tsunami of 2016 with 33 HRs. This from a guy who'd scuffled for 34 in 1,560 minor-league PAs. Alas, 22 were solos. Alas, alas, his 19 walks were the fewest ever by a player with that many jacks. No clue what we have here over the long haul.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	B	B	B	B

TIER 3

8. JASON KIPNIS, INDIANS
Kipnis has been a little all over the place — a .300 season with no power or speed, a 30-SB season with a low AVG, last year's 23-HR outbreak after hitting six and nine. If you're playing the five-year norms, he's .272-14-67-82-22, but flip the HRs and SBs for a more credible projection.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	B	B	B	C

9. DUSTIN PEDROIA, RED SOX
Pedey cajoled 154 games out of his grimy, tatty little body for his finest body of work since 2011. It's hard to be 100-percent confident in his durability at this point (offseason knee surgery provided the latest scar), but he's made a career of people betting against him.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	B	C	C	F

10. JONATHAN VILLAR, BREWERS
Villar, whom the Brewers got from Houston for a non-prospect, wins the 2016 Mr. Inexplicable Award for his .285-19-63-92-62. His farcical .373 BAbip and 25.6 SO% portend an offensive freefall, but you have to take the steals where you can get 'em. Moves from short to second to accommodate Orlando Arcia.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	B	C	D	A

11. IAN KINSLER, TIGERS
Four Hall of Famers and Ian Kinsler — that's your list of 200-HR/200-SB second basemen. With 28 and 14 last year, Kinsler crossed both thresholds when, at 34, he did a 180 on what appeared to be career deterioration.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	A	C	B	C

12. JONATHAN SCHOOP, ORIOLES
We gave you the scoop on Schoop last year when we labeled him a sleeper, and he obliged with 25 homers and 82 runs and RBIs apiece. He took pitchers deep more often than he took walks (21), however, so he may cap-out there if and until he learns to stay in his shoes.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	B	B	B	F

13. DEVON TRAVIS, BLUE JAYS
Travis has hit .300 in each of his two (injury-splintered) seasons to date, and it's no stretch to pencil him into the 20-home run club. November knee surgery could slow him on the sacks after he hit 28 doubles last season.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	B	C	C	D

14. JAVIER BAEZ, CUBS
A Ben Zobrist-type shapeshifter destined once again to staff a variety of positions. Baez's refinement as a hitter has been exponential even though his strike zone is still a moving target. If Javy had a clearer path to 550 ABs, he could go 20/20 (HRs/SBs) and 80/80 (Rs/RBIs).

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	B	C	C

15. NEIL WALKER, METS
Save a June swoon, Walker was shredding NL pitching until he had to shut his season down in late August at .282-23-55-57-3 in 113 games. Back surgery, which Walker opted for in September, is never a good thing, though.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	B	C	F

16. JOSE PERAZA, REDS (Z)
Peraza's fate is tied to what the Reds decide to do with expensive, 35-year-old, 2018 free agent Brandon Phillips. Meantime, they can move Jose around the yard.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	C	F	D	A

TIER 4

17. JOE PANIK, GIANTS
A two-year AVG of .309 disintegrated to .239, although his 10 HRs, 62 RBIs and 67 runs were serviceable. He's what he was projected to be: a nice player with a low ceiling.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	C	C	C	D

18. JOSH HARRISON, PIRATES
Harrison has shed numerous position qualifications, meaning that as a second baseman-only now, his value is barely above replacement level — .280-5-55-55-15 or so.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	C	F	C	C

19. STARLIN CASTRO, YANKEES
Castro, branded a blue-chipper in his early 20s, turned out to be a no-growth stock. The career-high 21 home runs were something, but nothing 110 other players didn't do.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	C	C	F

20. LOGAN FORSYTHE, RAYS
Forsythe's statistical year was a clone of Castro's, as is his 2017 projection. And like Harrison, he's a former multi-position resource now pigeonholed at the keystone.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	C	B	C	F

21. Brandon Drury, Diamondbacks
22. Cesar Hernandez, Phillies
23. Kolten Wong, Cardinals
24. Ryan Schimpf, Padres
25. Brett Lawrie, White Sox
26. Brandon Phillips, Reds
27. Danny Espinosa, Angels

TIER 5

28. Jace Peterson, Braves
29. Sean Rodriguez, Braves
30. Raul Mondesi, Royals
31. Cory Spangenberg, Padres
32. Whit Merrifield, Royals
33. Chase Utley, Free Agent
34. Joey Wendle, Athletics
35. Jed Lowrie, Athletics
36. Kelly Johnson, Free Agent
37. Kiké Hernandez, Dodgers
38. T. J. Rivera, Mets
39. Tyler Saladino, White Sox
40. Scooter Gennett, Brewers

Third Basemen

NOLAN ARENADO

TIER 1

1. NOLAN ARENADO, ROCKIES

Miguel Cabrera (2012-13) is the only other third baseman ever to combine 260 RBIs and 700 total bases in a two-year span, and Arenado has not even reached full maturity as a hitter. Last year he doubled his walks, reduced his strikeout rate and kept his batting average (.294) on the upswing. And btw, he's only nine months older than Kris Bryant.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	A	A	A	F

2. KRIS BRYANT, CUBS

Bryant is Arenado minus the Coors Effect, albeit a different player because Joe Maddon has the luxury of slotting a 39-homer MVP into the 2-hole. The upshot is that Kris finished within two of joining Mike Trout atop the MLB runs leaderboard (121), but was out-RBI'd by 16 players.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	A	A	A	C

3. JOSH DONALDSON, BLUE JAYS

Another mauler who bats second, Donaldson posted numbers virtually identical to Bryant's. They also were indistinguishable from his MVP season of 2015 except for the peculiar juxtaposition of his RBI/BB from 123/73 to 99/109. If he drops to third or fourth in the lineup, the flip will be between his *runs* and RBIs.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	A	A	A	F

TIER 2

4. MANNY MACHADO, ORIOLES

Machado is one of 10 players ever to hit 35 HRs twice by an age-23 season. He's skirting the Tier 1/2 borderline only because his two-year RBI average is 23 in arrears of the trio in front of him. Manny would have joined them anyway had Buck Showalter not forgotten what the sign for "steal" was (20 SBs in 2015, zero last year). Qualifies at shortstop.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	A	A	B	D

5. KYLE SEAGER, MARINERS

He's now the "other Seager," but although he was upstaged in 2016 by a bro seven years his junior, the disparity was more perception than reality. Kyle's season (.278-30-99-89-3) was easily the best of his six and should embody what he'll look like going forward.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	B	B	A	F

6. ANTHONY RENDON, NATIONALS

Rendon's 2016 season line of .270-20-85-91-12 was actually a reboot from 2014 (.287-21-83-111-17). The in-between year (bum knee) is not to be spoken of. There are plenty of bangin' third basemen from which to choose, but because Anthony's best is in front of him, he might represent the most bang for the buck.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	B	C	B	D

7. EVAN LONGORIA, RAYS

Longoria's nine-year body of work to begin a career compares favorably to that of almost any third baseman. Yet, because the Rays are rarely able to surround him with threats and he's not the take-a-walk type, he's never truly been upper crust. After a two-year recession in which he averaged .261-22-82-78-4, his .273-36-98-81-0 of 2016 was more typical.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	B	B	B	F

8. ADRIAN BELTRE, RANGERS

It appeared that Beltre's magic was finally waning, but then in 2016, he became the first 37-year-old hot cornerman ever to go 30-100-.300. His 1.38 SO/BB ratio (the second best of his 19-year career) implies that he's lost neither his eye nor bat whip. With age comes injury risk.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	C	C	B	F

TIER 3

9. JOSE RAMIREZ, INDIANS

Ramirez exploded his slash line from .219/.291/.340 to .312/.363/.462, but it was no secret he could hit (and run — 22 SBs) if afforded everyday play. None of that is a mirage for the 24-year-old former position-pinballer; he's the real deal. Qualifies in outfield.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	B	D	B	B

Tom DiPace

MARTIN PRADO

10. ALEX BREGMAN, ASTROS
Bregman's destiny in the hobby resides in Tier 1 — perhaps as soon as 2018. After tearing up the farms and surviving a 1-for-34 start in The Show, Bregman headed up that path by leading the Astros with a .313 average and 34 RBIs from Aug. 6 on. Although pitch recognition was a mystery in Houston, he walked more than he whiffed in the minors.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	C	C	B	F

11. TODD FRAZIER, WHITE SOX
Having succumbed to the swing-hard-or-go-home contagion, Frazier posted results that were unsurprising: only 98 RBIs on 40 homers and an egregious .225 AVG. The latter included a .169 mark with runners in scoring position that checked in 159th among the 160 players with at least 100 at-bats in that scenario.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
F	B	A	B	C

12. MAIKEL FRANCO, PHILLIES
At a position brimming over with home run talent, Franco's 25 were no big thing. He is, however, a few tweaks and a year or three away from turning that into 40. Since his SO% was a not-awful 16.8, there's still hope for that .255 average to turn into something useful, too.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	B	B	B	F

13. JAKE LAMB, DIAMONDBACKS
We designated only one sleeper — Lamb — in the first four tiers of third basemen last year. Boom. He went .249-29-91-81-6 in his first full season, where the only thing to hate on was a batting average depressed by his futility against southpaws (.164). Room for growth, obviously.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	B	B	B	F

14. JUSTIN TURNER, DODGERS
Turner was nearly 30 when he finally began to hit, and when he was floundering with a .220 average last June, it looked as if he'd promptly forgotten how at age 31. He then rebounded for a .301-24-74-60-3 in his last 98 games, which earned him a $64 million payday and convinced the fantasy crowd he was for real.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	C	C	B	F

TIER 4

15. RYON HEALY, ATHLETICS
Healy was a suspect prospect until something clicked on Aug. 14, after which he batted .349 (first in the AL) with pop (.589 SLG, including a 470-foot homer). To build on that, he'll have to cancel some of those fishing expeditions (5-to-1 SO/BB).

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	C	C	C	F

16. MIGUEL SANO, TWINS
Sano boasts the biggest raw power this side of Giancarlo Stanton but, pushing 280 pounds, he's been injury-prone, ill-equipped to play any position, unable to catch up to high heat and as seduced by down-and-away sliders as cheeseburger sliders. Sumo wrestlers consume up to 10,000 calories per day, so if the baseball thing doesn't work out...

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
F	C	B	B	F

17. NICK CASTELLANOS, TIGERS
Charged alternately with the crime of sacrificing power for average and sacrificing contact for power; there is still no consensus on Castellanos. He was on pace for .285-25-80-75-2 or thereabouts when he banged up his hand in early August.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	C	C	F

18. MIKE MOUSTAKAS, ROYALS
Moose was in the process of crafting his best power season — albeit with a batting-average regression — prior to multiple injuries in May that canceled the rest of his schedule. Potential bargain, possible bust.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
F	C	C	B	F

19. MARTIN PRADO, MARLINS
Regular readers know of our long-standing affection for Prado as a late-round target, but the jacked-up state of the position no longer justifies drafting him as a starting third baseman — despite a .293 career AVG.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	C	F	C	F

20. JUNG HO KANG, PIRATES
Only Ryan Howard and Pedro Alvarez homered more often than Kang in fewer than 400 plate appearances. We can't be all gung ho on his outlook, though, after allegations of a sexual assault and leaving the scene of a DUI crash in a six-month period.

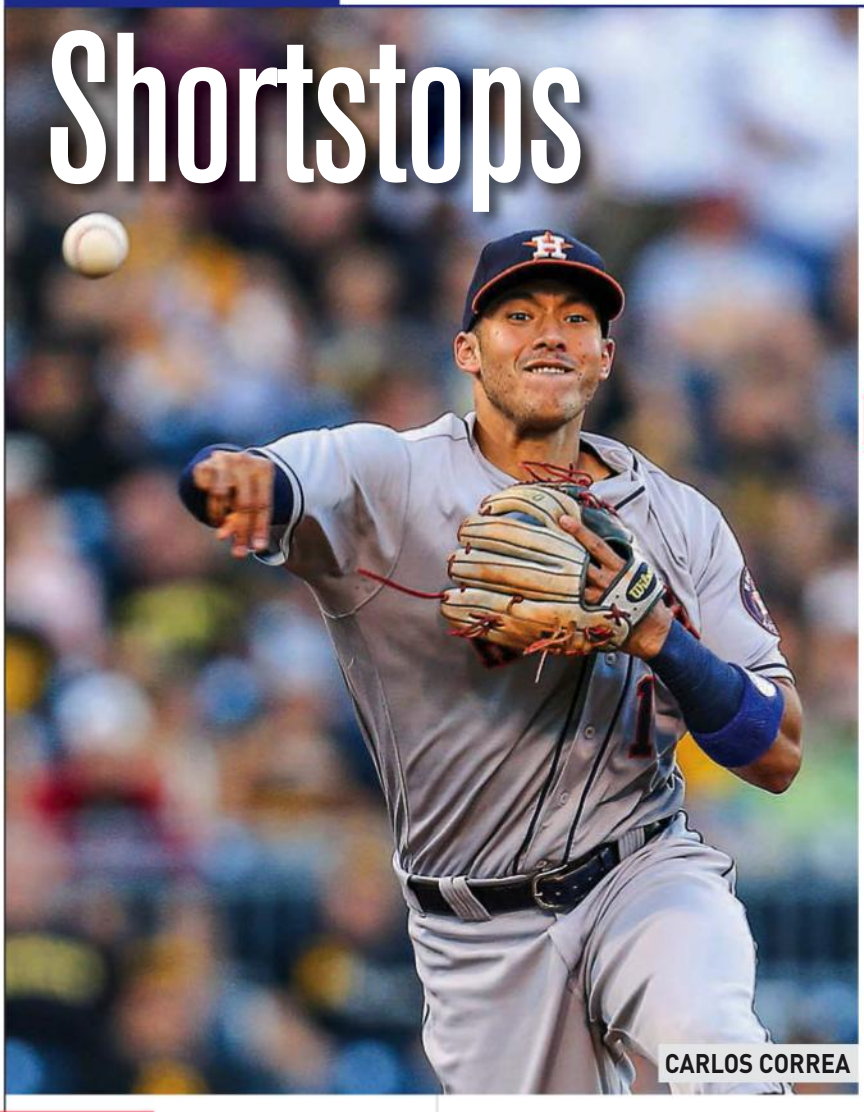
AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	C	C	C	F

21. Eduardo Nuñez, Giants
22. Eugenio Suarez, Reds
23. Yangervis Solarte, Padres
24. Travis Shaw, Brewers

TIER 5

25. Adonis Garcia, Braves
26. David Wright, Mets
27. Jedd Gyorko, Cardinals
28. Pablo Sandoval, Red Sox
29. Yunel Escobar, Angels
30. Chase Headley, Yankees
31. Jhonny Peralta, Cardinals
32. Yoan Moncada, White Sox
33. Trevor Plouffe, Free Agent
34. Jose Reyes, Mets
35. Jurickson Profar, Rangers
36. Hernan Perez, Brewers
37. Brock Holt, Red Sox
38. Eduardo Escobar, Twins
39. Rafael Devers, Red Sox
40. Conor Gillaspie, Giants

Shortstops



CARLOS CORREA

TIER 1

1. CARLOS CORREA, ASTROS

Those who joined us in swimming against the tide of Correamania last spring to favor Xander Bogaerts were rewarded, but the current is about to shift. Carlos, who led the position with 96 RBIs in an otherwise vaguely dissatisfying campaign, owns the singular talent to hit a gear all his own. Like a late-'90s A-Rod gear.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	B	B	A	B

2. XANDER BOGAERTS, RED SOX

Between the May 31sts of 2015 and 2016, Bogie batted .343 with 95 RBIs and 107 runs. Last year his OPS loitered above .900 into late June, then tailed off to .714 over his final 85 games. He's yet to pinpoint that sweet spot of exactly what type of hitter he is, but he's only 24 and just a mini-notch below Correa in ability.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
A	A	B	B	B

3. COREY SEAGER, DODGERS

Folded between a slow start and some casual contact with the September rookie wall, Seager went .336-23-56-81-0 in 112 games. To sustain that over 162 games, he'll need more strength, added experience and a comfort zone with left-handed pitching. Those things will come, but probably not all at once.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
A	A	B	B	D

TIER 2

4. FRANCISCO LINDOR, INDIANS

His offensive game is coming together sooner than many expected, and Lindor already exerts a positive impact on five categories. He doesn't possess the silly ceiling of the Tier 1 phenoms, but neither has he necessarily topped out at his 2016 line of .301-15-78-99-19.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
A	A	C	B	B

5. TREA TURNER, NATIONALS

In a calendar year, Turner has gone from a Tier 5 sleeper to minor-league shortstop to dynamic second baseman/outfielder in Washington and back to short in Tier 2. He was just the fourth rookie in history (Ted Williams among them) to swat .340 with at least 13 homers after an All-Star break, and none of the others could dream of the wheels that should spin to 50 thefts this year.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	B	C	C	A

TIER 3

6. TREVOR STORY, ROCKIES

Before there was Gary Sanchez, there was Story, laying waste to the record books for home runs at the start of a career. By the time he was shut down with a torn thumb ligament, he'd hoisted 27 in 97 games. A course correction is in order here, but by no means a prohibitive one.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	B	B	B	D

7. JEAN SEGURA, MARINERS

On the subject of course corrections, Segura's will be more drastic. After three years of him averaging .267-8-43-64-30, the Diamondbacks sold high off a .319-20-64-102-33. He's a fine player, but don't *buy* high.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	B	C	C	B

8. ADDISON RUSSELL, CUBS

It's challenging to decipher Russell's 2016 counterintuitive season, mainly because Joe Carter in 1997 is the only other player ever to bat as low as .238 with as few as 21 homers, yet as many as 95 RBIs. Let's just say he's pretty good and going to get a lot better.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	B	C	B	D

9. TROY TULOWITZKI, BLUE JAYS

Inescapably, Tulo's salad days are behind him, but the meat of the matter is that 25 HRs and 80 RBIs for a shortstop are no small potatoes. The cautionary tale is that he's missed more than 30 games in seven of his 11 seasons.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	B	B	F

10. ALEDMYS DIAZ, CARDINALS

The Cards were so skeptical of Diaz in July 2015 that they designated him for assignment. Nobody claimed him, and when Jhonny Peralta's injury presented a job opp nine months later, he ripped at a .400 clip for a month.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	B	C	B	D

Correz: Tom DiPace; Andrus: AP Images

11. ELVIS ANDRUS, RANGERS
This is what Andrus' 2016 career year looked like: .302-8-69-75-24. This is what the seven before it looked like, on average: .270-4-52-82-31. The run-scoring was down last season because he was dropped to the bottom of the order.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	B	F	C	B

12. MARCUS SEMIEN, ATHLETICS
Oakland's patience with Semien's hamhanded defense of 2015 paid off with drastic improvement on both ends of his game. Though he doesn't get the pub of the other young shortstop studs, his 27 HRs at the position tied Story for most of them all. A .238 AVG minimized their impact.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	B	B	C	C

13. BRANDON CRAWFORD, GIANTS
With improved pitch recognition, Crawford was able to raise his average 19 points (to .275) and exactly duplicate his 84 RBIs despite losing 9 HRs (to 12). Once an offensive liability, he's now solidly plus.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	C	B	F

14. DANSBY SWANSON, BRAVES
Speed bump warning on the fast track, but Swanson will be a star. Though he was hustled to Atlanta last summer 14 months after he was drafted, he adjusted magnificently with a .351 average and .984 OPS in his last 23 games.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	C	C	C

15. MATT DUFFY, RAYS
Conventional wisdom held that Duffy couldn't replicate his shockingly strong 2015 rookie year. He didn't, but only because he played on a bad heel that ultimately required surgery. Now 100% and extricated from the deeper third base pool, he shapes up as a competent option at short.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	D	C	C

TIER 4

16. CHRIS OWINGS, DIAMONDBACKS
One of our favorite sleepers awakened with a stat line that featured a 50-point average upgrade to .277 and 21 stolen bases in 119 games. After earlier deployments to second base and center, those numbers — and the further potential he harbors — should be enough for Owings to fend off Nick Ahmed for the shortstop job. Qualifies in outfield.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	D	C	B

ELVIS ANDRUS

17. ASDRUBAL CABRERA, METS
An 0-for-32 drought with runners in scoring position aside, Cabrera unpredictably mustered his best season in 2016: .280-23-62-65-5. His established levels orbit around .250 AVG and 15 HRs.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	C	C	F

18. DIDI GREGORIUS, YANKEES
Gregorius' 19 HRs (of his 20 total) as a shortstop tied for fifth most ever by left-handed hitter. Nobody saw that coming, but again, consider the context that long-balls throughout the game are up 34% since 2014. His walk rates have been in a freefall from 9.2% to 7.4% to 5.7% to 3.2%.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	C	C	C	D

19. ANDRELTON SIMMONS, ANGELS
Simmons is beginning to demystify what went awry subsequent to his 17-HR first full season of 2013. He batted an abjectly empty .251 for 338 games after that, then, starting last July, .312. He's never going to be a big gun, but he's roto-relevant again.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	F	C	D

20. TIM ANDERSON, WHITE SOX
Speaking of swing-happy, Anderson didn't deserve his .283 average based on the White Sox record he set for fewest walks (13) in a 100-strikeout (117) season. Aside from a possible 25 SBs, he could be in for a rocky sophomore campaign.

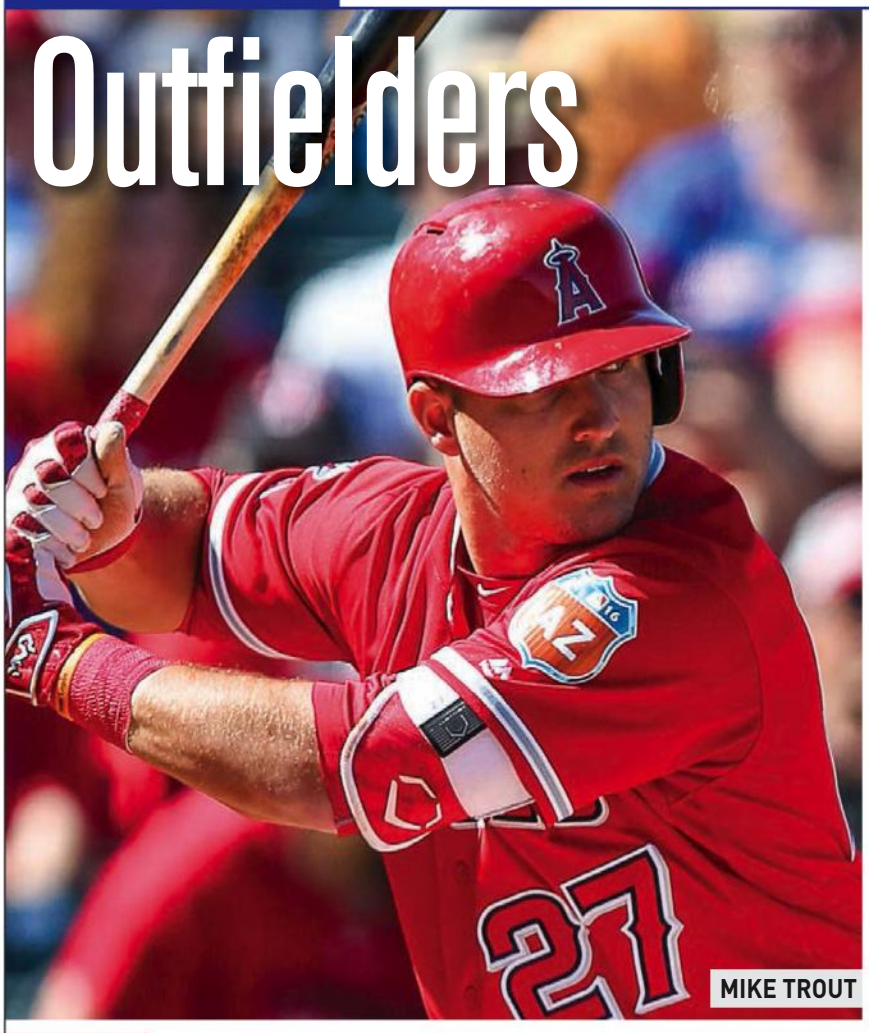
AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	C	D	D	B

21. Alcides Escobar, Royals
22. Zack Cozart, Reds
23. Freddy Galvis, Phillies
24. J.J. Hardy, Orioles
25. Orlando Arcia, Brewers
26. Jorge Polanco, Twins
27. Jordy Mercer, Pirates
28. Ketel Marte, Diamondbacks
29. Jose Iglesias, Tigers
30. Luis Sardinas, Padres
31. Adeiny Hechavarria, Marlins

TIER 5

32. Chase d'Arnaud, Braves
33. Nick Ahmed, Diamondbacks
34. Erick Aybar, Free Agent
35. Shawn O'Malley, Mariners
36. Gleyber Torres, Yankees
37. Tim Beckham, Rays
38. Cristhian Adames, Rockies
39. J.P. Crawford, Phillies
40. Amed Rosario, Mets

Outfielders



MIKE TROUT

TIER 1

1. MIKE TROUT, ANGELS

He's Jordan or LeBron ... Faulk or Tomlinson ... Jobs or Wozniak. Not that anyone needs convincing of Trout's unequivocal supremacy: Since 2012, he ranks first in runs, fifth in AVG and HRs, seventh in RBIs and 10th in SBs. No one else shows up in the top 25 of all those categories, with only Paul Goldschmidt, Andrew McCutchen and Ryan Braun even in the top 50. But don't worry, pretty soon he'll be entering his prime years.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
A	A	A	A	B

2. MOOKIE BETTS, RED SOX

OK, so Betts is Pippen to Trout's Jordan; that's not a bad thing to be. His numbers were comparable to Trout's in 2016, although it's dubious that he'll stay consistently in the 30-HR/110-RBI zone, and he'll have to burnish the scrawny 6.7 BB% for his average to remain elite. That's just pickin' some nits, though.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
A	A	B	A	B

3. BRYCE HARPER, NATIONALS

Keeping Harper in Tier 1 comes with the assumption that he did indeed deal with some oft-denied shoulder woes last year that whittled him down from Mike Piazza to Eugenio Suarez. His exit velocity decreased by more than 2 mph (to barely the league average); his launch angle was up dramatically; and his infield pop percentage nearly doubled. No pressure, but this coin flip could make or break your season.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	A	A	B	C

TIER 2

4. CHRISTIAN YELICH, MARLINS

After correctly foretelling Yelich's 2016 career year, we don't think he can move much beyond his .298-21-98-78-9. He can flirt with batting titles, 100-run and 20-SB seasons, though. On balance, he's the kind of player you don't want to shell out Tier 1 money for but rather pay a fair price then lock him up for as many years as your league allows.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
A	B	B	B	C

5. RYAN BRAUN, BREWERS

Braun's production was his most comprehensive since 2012, as his hodgepodge of 30 homers, 91 RBIs, 80 runs, .305 AVG and 16 stolen bases was equaled only by Betts. (Trout missed out on making it a trio by one bomb.) Expect something similar, but be aware that he missed 177 games in that same period.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	C	A	A	B

6. CHARLIE BLACKMON, ROCKIES

Now 30, Blackmon's boisterous .324-29-82-111-17 line of 2016 doubtless represents his apex. A better reference point for your cheat sheet is his three-year norm of .299-22-71-95-29. Danger will surface if the Rockies fall out of the race by the trade deadline, as he and Carlos Gonzalez will bid farewell to Coors.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	A	B	C	B

7. GREGORY POLANCO, PIRATES

His career is unfolding in fits and starts to a degree, but Polanco is inching closer to fantasy aristocracy. It looked as if that breakthrough would happen last year when he raked through June (.892 OPS), then he abruptly changed his approach. He hit 12 of his 22 HRs after that, but batted only .216 with a 3.4 SO/BB ratio. It was just a half-season of merit, but we're still taking the glass half-full stance.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	B	B	A	C

8. GEORGE SPRINGER, ASTROS

Like Brian Dozier, Springer is another hitter who shouldn't be batting leadoff (.261-29-82-116-9, 178 SOs), especially when he could be driving in Jose Altuve while being protected on the back end by Houston's other lumberjacks. Given the hand that's dealt, he's still a significant asset entering the key age-27 season.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	A	B	B	C

9. CARLOS GONZALEZ, ROCKIES

Gonzalez finished one bleeder away from a .300-25-100 season despite tailing off to a very average three months after a torrid start that saw him hitting .318 and slugging .557 at the All-Star break. His batting title of 2010 and his 40-HR and 20-SB years are distant in the rearview mirror, so that 2016 line is likely illustrative of whom he is now — although, like Blackmon, he'll take a body blow if dealt.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
A	B	B	A	F

Tom DiPace

10. STEPHEN PISCOTTY, CARDINALS

Piscotty presents an opportunity to pounce on an already top-notch hitter who's still on the way up the mountain. The 26-year-old's next step up from .273-22-85-86-7 figures to circle .290-28-100-90-10.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	A	B	B	D

11. STARLING MARTE, PIRATES

Marte's personal bests of a .311 AVG and 47 SBs (in only 129 games) kept his fantasy significance afloat while his power waned to 9 HRs and his September availability to near zero (bad back). The optimistic bet to be made is that he'll revisit his 20-HR/80-R/80-RBI track.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	B	C	B	A

12. ANDREW MCCUTCHEN, PIRATES

Cutch has made no excuses for the first clunker of his career, but because he was mired at a .719 OPS for four months, we can't justify returning him to his Tier 1 perch. Still, because he ricocheted to .852 over the last two, we're more inclined toward "anomaly" than "washed up."

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	B	B	B	D

13. A.J. POLLOCK, DIAMONDBACKS

Pollock's .315-20-76-111-39 was the only one of its kind in 2015. Elbow and groin injuries limited his encore to 12 games and prevented us from seeing how authentic that was. Guarded confidence here that it is.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	B	C	C	B

14. GIANCARLO STANTON, MARLINS

We're now in Year 8 of the Stanton Watch... spring after spring of springing for 50 homers and 130 RBIs at the draft or auction confab only to get 60 cents on the dollar. One way to look at it is that he's too inherently injury- and swing/miss-prone ever to cash in on his promise. The other is that his at bat-to-home run ratio of 14.33 is seventh all-time.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	B	A	A	F

15. J.D. MARTINEZ, TIGERS

Per 162 games, Martinez averaged 16 HRs from 2011-13. Since then, it's 28, with a .299 batting average. He's not an overly opportunistic run-producer. Risk factors include trade rumors and DH-quality defense that may number his days in the outfield.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	B	A	B	F

16. ODUBEL HERRERA, PHILLIES

Having nearly doubled his longball output to 15, steal sum to 25 and BB% to 9.6, Herrera — however unlikely for a Rule 5 Draft product — is the genuine article. Just 25, he can sprout into even more as the Phillies retool.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	B	C	C	B

17. YOENIS CESPEDES, METS

Cespedes, alternately brilliant and bewildering, needs only to lay off the high cheese and the high life of NYC to reach levels as yet unseen. The only other player of the last 75 years to debut at age 26 or older and hit 20-plus HRs in each of his first five seasons was Dan Uggla, who then promptly fell off the map. FWIW.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	A	B	F

18. JUSTIN UPTON, TIGERS

Upton slogged through a 200-game stretch in which he batted .231 — third lowest of regulars behind Derek Norris and Todd Frazier (who out-homered him 49 to 27). Then, he wrapped up 2016 with a .309 AVG and 18 HRs in 38 games. He's an inveterate tease, but no other player of his age is within sniffing distance of his HR/RBI/SB parlay.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	B	B	B	D

TIER 3

19. LORENZO CAIN, ROYALS

Cain's demotion from near Tier 1 status is a product of two things: (1) the wrist injury that prevented us from seeing if he had another plane to his superb 2015 season; and (2) the relative similarity within the cluster of outfielders beyond the top 15 or so.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	C	C	C	C

20. KEVIN KIERMAIER, RAYS

Female fans would disagree that there's nothing sexy about KK, but for our purposes, he's just a safe, solid five-category contributor. Key takeaways from 2016 were his greatly increased HR and BB percentages in the second half.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	C	C	B

21. MARK TRUMBO, FREE AGENT

Seventy percent of Trumbo's MLB-leading 47 HRs traveled at least 400 feet. That homer total must be regarded as a one-time indulgence, though, as his average was 29 in his four other complete campaigns.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	C	A	B	F

22. BILLY HAMILTON, REDS

The fantasy value of a stolen base these days can't be underestimated; the game's 2015-16 theft rate was the lowest since 1972-73. That makes Hamilton, despite his other black holes, a virtual one-man category winner. Billy is brittle, but his 150-game swipe pace the last two years extrapolates to 75.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	B	F	F	A

23. ADAM JONES, ORIOLES

Jones' data are never of the "monster" variety, but his consistency and durability make for a good night's sleep. He's the only player who's not fallen below 25 HRs and 82 RBIs any year since 2011.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	B	B	B	F

24. MATT KEMP, BRAVES

Kemp's 35-HR/108-RBI campaign was his best since he nearly won the 2011 NL MVP Award, but peripherals suggest he's more credibly the guy who averaged 24/95 in 2014-15. No longer runs or walks. Pretty much moseys.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	B	B	F

25. MICHAEL BRANTLEY, INDIANS

Brantley, who underwent shoulder surgery in August, is a game-time decision. This ranking presumes he debuts in May, but if he looks good in spring training, slide him into the middle of Tier 2.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	C	C	C	C

26. JACKIE BRADLEY JR., RED SOX

Bradley is an outside-the-box player teeming with tools that don't always show up. Discounting his 29-game hitting streak last year, he's batted .220 over four seasons, and he rarely steals despite being gunned down only twice in 24 tries. The aptitude to do so much more remains alluring.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	B	C	B	C

27. ADAM EATON, NATIONALS

If you go to Baseball-Reference.com and read left to right, these are the numerical differences between Eaton's two most recent seasons: 4, 17, 9, 7, 1, 1, 0, 0, 3, 4, 3, 5, 16, .003, .001, .003 .002, 3, 2, 1, 0, 2, 1, 0. Quintessential No. 3 outfielder on a roto roster.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	B	D	C	C

DAVID DAHL

28. DAVID DAHL, ROCKIES

Dahl came up in late July, hit safely in his first 17 games and never really stopped. We envision a string of .300 seasons and copious contributions in all the other columns that look a lot like Yelich's.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
A	C	C	C	D

29. ENDER INCIARTE, BRAVES

Inciarte is handy in three categories and a cipher in two. Only Joey Votto and Trea Turner had more hits after the All-Star Game, but he drove in only 9.12% of the runners who were on base when he batted — the lowest rate of all qualifiers.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
A	B	F	F	C

30. JOC PEDERSON, DODGERS

Pederson became, in his second full season, a less passive hitter to fairly promising results that included a 1.081 OPS in September/October. A 36-point batting average escalation was the corollary of 40 fewer strikeouts.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	C	B	B	D

31. KOLE CALHOUN, ANGELS

Calhoun is what you're hunting in the middle third of a draft. A vast correction in his SO/BB ratio from 3.64 to 1.76 may foreshadow something even better than his two-year norm of .263-22-79-84-3.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	B	B	B	F

32. NOMAR MAZARA, RANGERS

The Maz buzz dissipated after he staggered to a .228 AVG over his last 92 games. Mulligan for being the only every-day player who was born in 1995. It's a when-not-if situation for one of the game's most promising hitters.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	B	B	F

33. YASMANY TOMAS, DIAMONDBACKS

A disillusioning 9-HR debut in 2015 evolved into a 31-HR feast as the 25-year-old Cuban assimilated. He's still bamboozled by the better righthanders, but the capacity to figure it out is there.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	A	B	F

34. KHRIS DAVIS, ATHLETICS

Davis, in a training regimen he's used since he was a kid, swats at popcorn seeds with a broomstick. It's working. He was swatting beach balls throughout 2016, swelling his home runs by 15 to 42. Last three AVGs: .244, .247, .247.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
F	C	A	B	F

35. DEXTER FOWLER, CARDINALS

Fowler is a volume run-scoring leadoff man who averages only 42 RBIs. In the other three categories, he's a place-holder who can throw in a decently big number in one of them now and then.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	B	C	D	C

36. BYRON BUXTON, TWINS

Buxton presents one of the most intriguing situations in the roto-realm thanks to his torrid finish. This ranking effectively splits the difference between what he was (i.e., maybe the worst hitter in the game) until last September, when he went .287-9-22 and led the AL with 24 runs. He's just 23, and his tools are stoopid.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	C	C	C	B

37. KYLE SCHWARBER, CUBS

Schwarber could wind up being many things — left fielder, catcher, home run king, leadoff man, batting champ, trade bait, mayor of Chicago. As awesome as he is/can be, we just can't bank on any of those things until his star in the Cubs galaxy is more clearly defined.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	B	C	F

38. MARCELL OZUNA, MARLINS

Quick — name the National League's starting center fielder in the 2016 All-Star Game. Here's your answer. Ozuna went ballistic in the first half (.307-17-47), then crumpled in the second (.209-6-29). He has all kinds of ability, if only he doesn't devolve into a Justin Upton-ish chameleon.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	B	B	F

39. ADAM DUVALL, REDS

Props to the Reds for scoring this unheralded prospect for Mike Leake in 2015. A year hence, Duvall had more HRs (33) than Joey Votto and more RBIs (103) than Kris Bryant. Pitchers have already found his ample holes, but his power is bona fide.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	C	B	B	F

40. MICHAEL CONFORTO, METS

Through April 2016, Conforto was on a 58-game .320-11-34-31-1 tear dating back to 2015. After that: .174-8-24-23-1 in 88 tilts. The standard indiscretions of youth or an alarming trend? We'll go with the former for now.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	B	C	F

41. JAY BRUCE, METS

Bruce looked as if he'd completely lost it in 2014-15, but his .875 OPS was the highest of his career at the time the Reds dealt him to the Mets last summer. Then, big Apple-itis (.685) cast his career back into a fog.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
F	C	B	B	F

AP Images

MELKY CABRERA

TIER 4

42. MELKY CABRERA, WHITE SOX

Deceptively effective. Since 2014, Cabrera is among 14 players to hit .290 with norms of at least 13 HRs, 70 Rs and 70 RBIs. He barely makes those minimums, but they at least imply a level of coherent competence.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	C	C	C	F

43. CAMERON MAYBIN, ANGELS

Anointed for superstardom when he reached the majors at 20, in the last decade Maybin has seen a jumble of injuries, trades and generalized frustration. His .801 OPS for the 2016 Tigers dwarfed his .678 going in, but there's no precedent for consistency.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	C	F	D	B

44. HUNTER PENCE, GIANTS

Injuries and age have exacted a toll on this long-time iron man of metronomic all-category production. If he can avoid the trainer's table, Pence can still supply stats (SB column excepted).

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	C	C	F

45. RANDAL GRICHUK, CARDINALS

Grichuk is another of the increasingly common monster mashers with acute contact and strike zone mastery miseries. He was the Birds' best hitter after returning from his Triple-A wake-up call in August, so conceivably they're being addressed.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	C	B	C	F

46. ANDREW BENINTENDI, RED SOX

The day may come — sooner than later — that Benintendi is a batting crown threat and a 20/20 man. The 22-year-old lacks present power but is already polished enough to hit .280-.290. There will be a lot of Red Sox circling the bases, so 70 runs and RBIs apiece are feasible.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	C	D	C	F

47. NICK MARKAKIS, BRAVES

Markakis went 32 plate appearances last July without a swing-and-miss. That encapsulates who he is — not the .300-hitting/20-homer/double-digit-steal stud of his youth, but a reliably high-contact gap-splitter.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	C	C	F

48. JACOBY ELLSBURY, YANKEES

It's never a good sign when you reach base on catcher's interference (12) more times than you circle them (nine). Ellsbury's speed is no longer a carrying tool either (41-for-58 the last two years). Just an ordinary player now.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	D	C	C

49. MAX KEPLER, TWINS

The rookie Kepler clubbed as many homers on Aug. 1 (three) as in the 51 games that followed. It wasn't without warts, but his debut was positive — indicative of a nice, if not especially earth-shattering, career ahead.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	C	B	C	F

50. SHIN-SOO CHOO, RANGERS

Choo's career path has been as a linear as an EKG. It hasn't flatlined, but at 34 and with a deep inventory of infirmities, there's gel on the defibrillator paddles.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	C	C	F

51. LEONYS MARTIN, MARINERS

A .671 career OPS doesn't exactly scream "draft me," but Martin is a near-lock for swipes in the 20s, and last year he unveiled a modicum of pop (15 HRs).

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	C	C	D	B

52. CARLOS GOMEZ, RANGERS

For his six weeks in Texas, Gomez looked like the high-Tier 2 dynamo of 2013-14. In between, he was a budget-bleeder of the highest order. He's just 31, so re-respectability is not out of reach.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	C	C	C	C

53. JOSE BAUTISTA, FREE AGENT

Though he takes care of himself, the 36-year-old Bautista has been in absentia for sizable segments of three of the last five seasons. Even if he survives 140 games, there's no shortage of healthy 30-HR men who *don't* struggle to hit .250.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
F	C	B	C	F

54. BEN ZOBRIST, CUBS

Zobrist turns 36 this year, and while you still worship him if you're in Wrigleyville, cooler fantasy heads recognize he's teetering on the brink of Runofthemillville. Qualifies at 2B.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	C	C	F

55. TRAVIS JANKOWSKI, PADRES

In an entirely up-for-grabs San Diego outfield, Jankowski is the most interesting piece because he can steal 40-to-50 bags over a full season if he can figure out a way to get to first.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	C	F	F	B

56. ALEX GORDON, ROYALS

Outside of a five-game/five-homer spurt in August, Gordon's season was calamitous — with a wrist injury as at least a partial excuse. His five-year average of .266-17-63-74-9 is a valid marker for a 2017 projection.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	C	C	C	F

57. DENARD SPAN, GIANTS

Span can rip .300 or pilfer 20 bases in any given year, but he didn't come close to doing either of those things in 2016. In a mixed league he is, at best, a fifth outfielder.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	F	D	C

CARLOS GOMEZ

58. TYLER NAQUIN, INDIANS

Sir Edmund Hillary couldn't have scaled Naquin's rookie wall. He dwelled above .300 from his second through 102nd games and hit all 14 of his HRs in a stretch of 56. Once pitchers determined he couldn't catch up to elevated gas, he hit .227 in his last 110 ABs (including the postseason). This ranking is based on his early success and latent promise.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	C	C	C	D

59. AVISAIL GARCIA, WHITE SOX

Garcia has been "the next big thing" for five years. He is, well, "big." The White Sox haven't given up on his colossal brute power yet, so neither will we. He has until June.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	C	C	C	F

60. ANDREW TOLES, DODGERS

Toles — a formerly released "issues" player by Tampa Bay given a second chance by Dodgers — blew into town last July and went .314-3-16-19-1 in 105 ABs. Don't let the single steal mislead; he once thieved 62 in A-ball.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	C	F	D	C

61. Eddie Rosario, Twins
62. Josh Reddick, Astros
63. Yasiel Puig, Dodgers
64. Domingo Santana, Brewers
65. Paulo Orlando, Royals
66. Melvin Upton Jr., Blue Jays
67. Roman Quinn, Phillies
68. Howie Kendrick, Phillies
69. Steve Souza Jr., Rays
70. Kevin Pillar, Blue Jays
71. Michael Saunders, Free Agent
72. Keon Broxton, Brewers
73. Jorge Soler, Royals
74. Rajai Davis, A's
75. Jayson Werth, Nationals
76. Curtis Granderson, Mets
77. Manuel Margot, Padres
78. Corey Dickerson, Rays
79. Mac Williamson, Giants
80. Brett Gardner, Yankees

Designated Hitters

1. NELSON CRUZ, MARINERS

At 36, Cruz's career should be in a recession. Far from it. Only McGwire, Ruth, Mays and Palmeiro hit more home runs in their ages 33-to-35 seasons. There's a fate-tempting element to straining the budget for a player at this stage of his career, but there's zero indication of erosion.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	B	A	B	F

2. KENDRYS MORALES, BLUE JAYS

Whereas Cruz's HR rating is more precisely an A+, Morales' is A-. In his favor to close the gap is that he departs the third-toughest park in which to hit the longball for one that's a smidge above average.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	B	A	B	F

3. HANLEY RAMIREZ, RED SOX

By topping the majors with 63 RBIs and ranking third with 22 HRs after the All-Star break, Ramirez patched together his most explosive offensive campaign since he outgrew basestealing. Serious question: What's he going to do without Big Papi around to keep his head screwed on?

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	B	B	B	F

4. CARLOS SANTANA, INDIANS

Santana has the real or imagined Joey Votto Passivity Disease (MLB-high 63.4% of pitches taken in 2016) without as much payoff. Though sustained improvement is improbable, his 34 HRs eclipsed his five-year average by a dozen; his average (.259) was up .028 from 2014-15; and his 87 RBIs and 89 runs were his most yet.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
F	B	B	B	F

5. CARLOS BELTRAN, ASTROS

Beltran's 29 HRs were somewhat illusory. He got 32% of his ABs at Yankee Stadium, whose friendly dimensions yielded 48% of his longballs. Minute Maid has become one of the tougher parks in which to put up numbers, and Carlos turns 40 in April.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
B	C	B	C	F

6. ALBERT PUJOLS, ANGELS

Pujols' latest foot malady (plantar fascia surgery) could wipe out his spring and/or delay his Opening Day. Though he must "cheat" to get into the better fastballs now (he once went 109 PAs without a walk last year), he and Nolan Arenado were the only players to go at least .290-20-85 from May 20 on.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	B	B	F

7. VICTOR MARTINEZ, TIGERS

Another geriatric (38) on DH life support, Martinez — like the others discussed — can still punish a baseball. An indicator that his bat speed is wilting, though, is that his SO% has soared from 6.6 to 10.7 to 14.8 the last three years.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
C	C	B	C	F

8. MATT HOLLIDAY, YANKEES

If Holliday can stay ambulatory — which is something he's had difficulty doing since 2014 — then he's liable to exploit Yankee Stadium's welcoming walls for 25 HRs. That's a significant "if" for a 37-year-old who offers little else of fantasy consequence.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	C	C	D	F

9. TREY MANCINI, ORIOLES

Mancini took Eduardo Rodriguez, David Price and Robbie Ray deep once apiece in the only three major-league games he played last year. Not bad. He's not a Grade-A prospect, but he's a good enough one to have maybe, oh, a Mitch Moreland-type future.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
D	C	C	D	F

10. PEDRO ALVAREZ, FREE AGENT

Alvarez, the NL home run king of 2013, is as one-dimensional as a picture of a sheet of paper. Not only is that column the only one he impacts positively, he can do so only in a platoon role.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
F	D	B	D	F

11. JOEY GALLO, RANGERS

We're not even sure the Rangers believe in Gallo anymore after a ghastly .040 batting average in a 17-game stint with the major-league club last year, although they're petrified to give up on a player whose raw power has inspired odes and sonnets. If given an opportunity to apply it, he might be — well, Alvarez.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
F	D	C	D	F

12. BYUNG HO PARK, TWINS

Park is another all-or-nothing DH, although he predominantly falls on the nothing side of the ledger. He batted .191 with the Twins, then .224 in Triple-A. (Is there such a thing as a "G" grade for batting average?) Keep one eye on Kennys Vargas as Minnesota's alternative.

AVG	R	HR	RBI	SB
F	D	C	D	F

Starting Pitchers

CLAYTON KERSHAW

Tom DiPace

TIER 1

1. CLAYTON KERSHAW, DODGERS

Actually, Kershaw resides in whatever tier exists above "1." In 2016, he charted the lowest WHIP in history (min. 20 GS) at 0.725, and the highest ERA+ (230) by a lefty in more than 100 years. The margin between his ERA and the next lowest among 1,000-inning pitchers the last seven years is roughly the difference between Max Scherzer and Kyle Lohse.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
A	A	A	A

2. MAX SCHERZER, NATIONALS

Scherzer ranks ahead of Kershaw in wins and whiffs since 2010 (in 16 more starts). His strikeout sum has risen five straight years; he's the lone active pitcher with multiple seasons of 275. Gopher balls have kept his ERAs (3.39 career; 2.95 the last four years) removed from Kershaw's alternate universe.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
A	A	A	A

TIER 2

3. MADISON BUMGARNER, GIANTS

Bum will never be as unhittable as Kershaw nor as overpowering as Scherzer, but if you're inclined to spend heavily on a starter only if he's been consistently superlative for more than three years, your buck should stop here. Over the last five, his ranges have been 13-18 wins, 2.74-3.37 ERA, 191-251 SOs, 1.008-1.114 WHIP.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
B	B	A	A

4. CHRIS SALE, RED SOX

Sale comes next closest to Bumgarner in uninterrupted duration of excellence, and the antidote to his slingshot win totals is the Red Sox lineup. There's some minor apprehension about his post-July 1 3.88 ERA last year and his full-season dip of 2.5 strikeouts per nine from 2015.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
A	B	A	A

5. COREY KLUBER, INDIANS

At his best — like he pitched during the 2016 postseason — Kluber is as good as anyone apart from Kershaw. He is capable, however, of going off the rails. In the calendar year beginning April 22, 2015, he went 9–18 with a 3.82 ERA. Since then (including the postseason), he's 22–7, 2.70. The elite-level strikeouts and WHIP have stayed stable throughout.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
B	B	A	A

6. NOAH SYNDERGAARD, METS

Only Kershaw owns a lower Fielding Independent Pitching (FIP) than Syndergaard over the last two years (min. 50 or more starts). With better defense behind him (dubious), more run support (the Mets averaged 2.5 in his 16 non-wins last year) and less pitch-count coddling (97 per start), Thor would be in the same general vicinity as Kershaw.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
B	A	A	B

DAVID PRICE

7. DAVID PRICE, RED SOX

Had Price not retired Josh Donaldson on a fly ball that nearly departed Fenway as the last batter he faced in 2016, he would have finished with a 4.00 ERA. That's baffling — and doubtless just a glitch — for a pitcher of his caliber. He's top 5 in all four starters' fantasy categories since 2010.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
A	B	A	B

8. JON LESTER, CUBS

Lester, despite just two sub-3.00 ERAs in his career, has always had the luxury of pitching for teams that could score. Consequently, only he, Zack Greinke and Justin Verlander have marshaled six 15-win seasons out of the last eight. Last year's career-low 2.44 earnie slotted fourth among 20-start hurlers, but his 3.41 FIP just 17th.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
A	B	B	A

9. JAKE ARRIETA, CUBS

Arrieta's paranormal run of 33 earned runs allowed in 35 starts was the most spectacular development of the last two fantasy seasons. Then mortality happened: a 4.44 ERA over his final 16 outings of 2016. Command (not health) was the culprit, so there's an expectation that he can resummon most of the sorcery.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
B	B	B	A

10. JOHNNY CUETO, GIANTS

Skittishness resulting from Cueto's wobbly late-2015 stint with the Royals proved baseless, as he was nothing but stellar in San Francisco. Removing the K.C. misstep, here's his per-33-start average since 2011: 17-2.56-188-1.055.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
B	B	B	A

11. JUSTIN VERLANDER, TIGERS

Gravity has been replaced by helium in Verlander's career trajectory. The former perennial Tier 1 stalwart had every earmark of irreversible decline before leading the AL in SOs (254) and WHIP (1.001) in 2016. He's capable of several more Tier 2s.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
B	B	A	A

12. CARLOS MARTINEZ, CARDINALS

Martinez is one of only three pitchers (Scherzer, Bumgarner) to have logged at least 14 wins and an ERA below 3.10 in both 2015 and '16. With his crackling stuff, an age-25 season is an ideal time to start hitting more strike zones and missing more bats.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
B	B	B	B

13. YU DARVISH, RANGERS

Darvish's cautious comeback from Tommy John went mostly well, lending abundant confidence that he can pick up where he left off three years ago. His 11.8 SOs/9 IP rate over 17 starts was just a tick below what it was in 2013, when he punched out 15% more batters than any other pitcher in the game.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
B	B	A	B

14. JULIO TEHERAN, BRAVES

Look closely at Teheran's line: 7-3.21-167-1.053. No pitcher has ever won as few as seven games while charting those other three numbers. The Braves gave him the scantest run support in the game.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
B	B	B	A

15. STEPHEN STRASBURG, NATIONALS

There seems to be some sort of impenetrable force field between Strasburg's performance and ceiling. He'll be Roger Clemens for awhile — such as his 16–0 binge in 2015-16 — then get hurt or encounter an extended, enigmatic patch of mediocrity.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
B	B	B	A

16. MASAHIRO TANAKA, YANKEES

There used to be a wrestler named Professor Tanaka who threw salt in his opponents' eyes. Hitters don't get any better looks at Masa's six-pitch repertoire. He doesn't throw anything hard enough to stuff all the columns, but he's a suitable SP2 (No. 2 starter).

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
B	B	C	A

17. KYLE HENDRICKS, CUBS

Hendricks will be everyone's favorite regressor. He makes the case with a .252 BAbip and 3.20 FIP that was 1.07 higher than his ERA. That said, don't write him off as a one-year wonder. His team catches and hits the ball, and he — as dependably as anyone — hits his spots.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	A	C	A

18. JACOB DEGROM, METS

It was a weird year for deGrom. He didn't win a game in May or June despite a 3.13 ERA, and he dilated it from 2.29 to 3.04 in just his last three starts. The type of ulnar nerve surgery he had in September is supposedly no big deal. Supposedly.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	B	B	A

19. RICK PORCELLO, RED SOX

Not that Porcello's massive year should be minimized, but winning 22 games with 7.63 runs of support per nine innings is not exactly epic. Determining whether he's that guy or the one who started the year with a seven-season 4.39 ERA will be a page-turner.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
B	C	C	A

JAKE ARRIETA

AP Images

COLE HAMELS

20. COLE HAMELS, RANGERS

Among active pitchers with as many as 2,000 IP, Hamels' SO% of 23.4 is the highest; his seven-year stretch of 200 IP is the longest; and he's 22–6 since becoming a Ranger. For some reason, those things have never quite added up to more than pretty good ERAs and WHIPs.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
B	B	A	C

21. AARON SANCHEZ, BLUE JAYS

Sanchez is a bowling ball thrower who straddled roles as a rookie in 2015, and now is the defending AL leaderboard topper in ERA (3.00), opponents' OPS (.625), opponents' SLG (.335), HRs/9 (0.70) and WIN% (15–2, .882). A career FIP of 3.78 and BAbip of .253 indicate that he might not be "all that."

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	B	B	B

22. GERRIT COLE, PIRATES

He went through his normal winter program, but it took months for Cole's elbow discomfort to subside. In 2015, it was his shoulder. We've seen this movie before, and often it doesn't end well. Should he dodge disaster, he's a top-10 starter. His .345 BAbip last season was 34 points higher than his previous career high and offers reason to believe he'll improve on his 3.88 ERA of 2016.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
B	B	B	B

23. CHRIS ARCHER, RAYS

Archer seemed afraid to throw strikes until July. Thereafter, his BBs/9 and ERA were 2.10 and 3.32, respectively, compared to 3.94 and 4.76 prior. Aside from four well-supported wins, he went 5–19 while gleaning 2.6 runs per start to work with. He's never stopped striking people out, though — third most by a RHP, 2014-16.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	C	A	B

24. ZACK GREINKE, DIAMONDBACKS

Greinke has followed the two transcendent ERAs of his career thusly: 2.16 in 2009 with a 4.17, and 1.66 in 2015 with a 4.37. Maybe now that he doesn't have to live up to himself, the intermittently elite righty will do another about-face.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
B	C	B	B

TIER 3

25. DALLAS KEUCHEL, ASTROS

Sinkers that don't sink — players call them meatballs or cookies. Foes partook of a culinary feast on Keuchel's tab until he conceded in September that shoulder problems were behind his collapse. The 2015 Cy Young Award might have been a one-off, but he's at worst an SP2 if healthy.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
B	B	B	B

26. MATT HARVEY, METS

Harvey's situation is a near-mirror image of Keuchel's, although there are some distinctions between the two: Harvey's shoulder was cut on in July, and he has even more upside if he ever reestablishes traction on a path that once seemed mapped straight to Cooperstown. Encouraging reports said that Harvey was throwing "normally" in December.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
B	B	B	B

27. KEVIN GAUSMAN, ORIOLES

When the Orioles finally stopped fiddling with his role and turned him loose for 30 starts last year, Gausman responded with 9-3.61-174-1.280, which can evolve into much more. Six of his last 18 starts were scoreless.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
B	B	B	C

28. CARLOS CARRASCO, INDIANS

A few times every season, Carrasco morphs into Bob Feller, but here's the rub: He's feast or famine. He's made 25 starts in which he's given up five or more runs and another 25 in which he's allowed none or one. He's also maddeningly non-durable. That 14-win, 216-SO season back in 2015 still sings like a siren, though.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	C	B	B

TANNER ROARK

29. TANNER ROARK, NATIONALS

The no-respect Rodney Dangerfield of the starting fraternity. Roark's extraordinary 2016 (16-2.83-172-1.171) was a "Groundhog Year" of 2014 (15-2.85-138-1.092). In between, he was a so-so utility pitcher. Last season he yielded the lowest rate of hard-hit balls (24.3%) in the majors.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
B	B	C	C

30. RICH HILL, DODGERS

Hill's bizarro career is a "web" of convolutions: Mapquest to find him in any given month, WebMD to decipher his various maladies and Statcast to appreciate his physics-defying curveball. At one juncture last year, he went 9–0 with a 1.43 ERA and 0.825 WHIP over 10 starts.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	B	C	A

31. ALEX REYES, CARDINALS

Reset the 2016 season clock to Aug. 9. Over the next 56 days, Reyes makes his MLB debut, celebrates his 22nd birthday, beats the Cubs three times and compiles the second-lowest ERA (1.57) in the game. He has "wow" stats and "wow" stuff.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	B	B	C

32. JAKE ODORIZZI, RAYS

While the odds against a pitcher named Odorizzi serving up a home run to a batter named Odor were astronomical, it happened last August. Only Kluber and Lester could match Odorizzi's 7–1 record and 2.71 ERA. His 13 no-decisions while allowing two or fewer earned runs set an AL record.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	C	B	B

33. JOSE QUINTANA, WHITE SOX

On the topic of well-pitched no-decisions, Quintana set the bar until last season, when his 13 victories snapped a three-year streak of 200 IP, sub-3.55 ERAs and exactly nine wins. "Q" tip: He's 10–3, 2.65 in July, then 17–18, 3.75 thereafter.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	B	B	C

34. CARLOS RODON, WHITE SOX

As the 2016 season progressed, Rodon began to embrace his inner power pitcher. He allowed two or fewer ERs in eight of his last 11 starts, posting double-digit SOs in the last two. Serious breakout candidate — although wins could be elusive.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	C	B	C

35. MARCUS STROMAN, BLUE JAYS

There are reasons to think Stroman has turned the corner — a 1.91 ERA reduction and a 22% increase in his swing-and-miss rate after June 30, plus a final FIP 0.66 lower than his actual ERA. We especially like his chances to enhance his so-so 7.3 SOs/9.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	C	B	C

36. MICHAEL FULMER, TIGERS

The rookie Fulmer was three scoreless innings shy of winning the AL ERA crown. He wafted in and out of grooves, though: 6.52 in his first four starts, 1.43 in his next 15, 5.54 in his last seven. Probably an SP3.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	C	C	B

37. MARCO ESTRADA, BLUE JAYS

Though he was one of just 13 150-inning non-knuckleballers not to average 90 mph with his fastball, Estrada has ridden his deluxe change-up to back-to-back AL leaderships in fewest H/9. Considering he didn't win more than seven games in a season until after he turned 30, and the volume of home runs he bequeaths, there's a testing-the-fates element to drafting him.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	C	C	A

38. STEVEN MATZ, METS

The Mets' maimed rotation will get out of the gate looking like a claiming race at Aqueduct. Matz's issue was a bone spur in his elbow. Oddly, he took a no-hitter into the eighth inning of his last start before submitting to the scalpel. Unscathed, he's a high Tier-2 talent.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	B	C	C

39. JAMESON TAILLON, PIRATES

Taillon, a TJS success story, has so far lived up to the pre-surgery hype. He was an inning short of a two-hit shutout in his second major-league start, then booked the NL's seventh-lowest ERA (3.07) from June 29 on. We'll see what happens when he's asked for deeper pitch counts, as he averaged only 86 last year.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	C	C	B

40. J.A. HAPP, BLUE JAYS

This is a pessimistic ranking for a 20-game winner, but veteran rotissarians get it: Happ is a 34-year-old finesse pitcher who'd never before collected more than a dozen triumphs, basked in 6.3 support runs per nine and profited from a .269 BAbip. He's a decent pitcher and a pro's pro who had a charmed season.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	C	C	C

41. JERAD EICKHOFF, PHILLIES

Superior control and a swing-and-miss curve make the 25-year-old Eickhoff interesting, especially if the Phillies can score more runs. He rarely dominates games, nor does he get blistered — a desirable quality in an SP3 type.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	C	B	B

42. DANNY DUFFY, ROYALS

Duffy just floods the zone with strikes (MLB-high 49.1% last year), which results in a lot of empty swings (188 SOs in 179.2 IP) and souvenirs (27 HRs). He doesn't often get stretched out, costing him a few wins.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	C	B	B

43. KENTA MAEDA, DODGERS

Maeda is a steady, unglamorous sort who won 16 games despite not making it to the sixth inning in more than half of his starts. If he's your third-best starter, you're fine; if he's your No. 2, you're nervous.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	C	C	B

44. AARON NOLA, PHILLIES

Nola reported a pain-free elbow over the winter — an elbow that carried him to a 3.12 ERA in his first 25 major-league starts before it began barking last June. Toss him on the pile of pitchers with the aptitude for Tier 2-quality seasons if they can remain pain-free.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	C	C	C

AP Images

45. SONNY GRAY, ATHLETICS

Any variation of "forearm soreness" — "extensor muscle inflammation" in Gray's case — is generally spin-speak for "uh-oh." The two-time 14-game winner was hammered mercilessly last season before skipping 10 starts then hitting 95 mph in one, final, reassuring 18-pitch outing.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	C	C	C

TIER 4

46. EDUARDO RODRIGUEZ, RED SOX

Throw out the unsightly stats. E-Rod began the season hurt, played with a knee brace for a time, suffered a relapse of pitch-tipping, toyed with a new windup and wrestled with the nuances of pitch selection. Through it all, he constrained hitters to a .210 AVG in the second half and an outstanding exit velocity of 81.6 mph.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	C	B	C

47. SEAN MANAEA, ATHLETICS

Many rookies start fast and fade. You want the ones like Manaea, who learned from early pastings and came back after the All-Star Game to hang up a .220 opponents' batting average and a 2.67 ERA.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	C	C	B

48. FELIX HERNANDEZ, MARINERS

Hernandez is a pitcher in transition — a former power purveyor who's now a sinker/change-up/curve mixmaster with below-average velo. Only 30, he still can have successful seasons with this formula, but nothing like those of his 2009-14 heyday.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
B	C	C	C

49. DANNY SALAZAR, INDIANS

Salazar, another "forearm" guy, thwarted his Cy Young contention of 2016 by finishing 1–3, 7.36 in 10 starts after commencing 10–3, 2.22 in 15. He took a two-inning/four-strikeout World Series cameo into the offseason as something to rebuild on.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	C	B	D

50. GARRETT RICHARDS, ANGELS

Opting for stem-cell therapy over TJS, Richards started only six times last year. Even in the best case, his workload will be more rationed than in 2015, when a 207-inning season returned 15 wins and 176 strikeouts.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	C	B	C

51. ALEX COBB, RAYS

Staying with the "injury-flagged good pitcher" theme of this rankings sector, Cobb opens the season 23 months removed from TJS. The former Rays ace was effective in his first three return starts in September, then 15 of the last 33 batters he faced came around to score.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	C	C	C

52. JON GRAY, ROCKIES

If he called anywhere else besides Coors Field his home, we'd be lumping in Gray with the Reyes/Rodon/Matz/Taillon constellation of prodigies. His 185 SOs last year included 16 in one game, and his 3.60 FIP ranked 10th among NL qualifiers. He's pitched well at Coors to date, but all ERAs ultimately fall prey to its wiles.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	F	A	C

53. DREW POMERANZ, RED SOX

Things didn't go as smoothly for Pomeranz in Boston (4.59 ERA) as they had gone in San Diego (2.47) following the July trade. Data points that recommend him to fantasy owners include a 1.170 WHIP and 9.2 SOs/9 since 2014.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	C	B	B

54. MATT MOORE, GIANTS

Six years beyond his Kershaw-like coronation, a post-surgical Moore is less. His 92.8-mph average heater was nothing special but was his highest since 2012, when his 94.1 ranked fifth in the game. Expectations are less ambitious now, but they're attainable.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	C	B	D

55. JEFF SAMARDZIJA, GIANTS

Rocking his distinctive schizophrenia, Samardzija went 10–5 with a 2.50 ERA in his first 10 and last 10 starts, with a 2–6, 6.30 sandwiched in between. He's a trusty source of punchouts, but everything else is a toss-up.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	C	B	C

56. TAIJUAN WALKER, D-BACKS

The 24-year-old Walker has made 23 starts of 0-1 ER, but also 16 of 4+ in which he failed to reach the sixth inning. A move from Safeco to Chase won't expedite his quest for consistency, but the SP2 raw materials are there.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	D	C	C

57. JULIO URIAS, DODGERS

Urias remains, at age 20, far ahead of the curve. His 9.82 SOs/9 in 2016 represented the second highest tempo ever by a teen with at least 75 innings.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	B	C	F

58. JOHN LACKEY, CUBS

Lackey's two-year 3.03 ERA should be measured against his 3.68 FIP and the 38 candles he blew out during the World Series. Still has that grimy slider, though.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	C	C	C

59. SHELBY MILLER, D-BACKS

Although it appeared otherwise in 2016, super-talents like Miller do not suddenly forget how to pitch. Amnesia is preferable to rehashing the first several months, but his last 13.1 innings were scoreless.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	C	C	D

60. MICHAEL PINEDA, YANKEES

Pineda was a freak show in 2016, rivaling Yordano Ventura as the pitcher with the most confoundingly cavernous gap between stuff and results. Joe Girardi called his 6-4.82-207-1.349 season "the most interesting I've ever seen." Our advice: Drink, draft, repeat.

WINS	ERA	SO	WHIP
C	D	B	C

61. Ervin Santana, Twins
62. Lance McCullers, Astros
63. Blake Snell, Rays
64. Vince Velasquez, Phillies
65. Luis Severino, Yankees
66. Robbie Ray, Diamondbacks
67. Javier Guerra, Brewers
68. Joe Ross, Nationals
69. James Paxton, Mariners
70. Dylan Bundy, Orioles
71. Anthony DeSclafani, Reds
72. Ian Kennedy, Royals
73. Adam Wainwright, Cardinals
74. Chris Tillman, Orioles
75. Yordano Ventura, Royals
76. Joe Musgrove, Astros
77. Drew Smyly, Rays
78. Collin McHugh, Astros
79. Lance Lynn, Cardinals
80. Jordan Zimmermann, Tigers
81. Ivan Nova, Pirates
82. Steven Wright, Red Sox
83. Jharel Cotton, Athletics
84. Jeremy Hellickson, Phillies
85. Matt Shoemaker, Angels
86. Francisco Liriano, Blue Jays
87. Zach Davies, Brewers
88. Hyun-Jin Ryu, Dodgers
89. Gio Gonzalez, Nationals
90. Trevor Bauer, Indians

Relief Pitchers

ZACH BRITTON

TIER 1

1. ZACH BRITTON, ORIOLES

Stand on second base and take four strides into center field. That's how far the average batted ball against Britton traveled last year. Feeble contact, no contact, an unintentional walk rate of 5.9%, zero home runs allowed after April 11, a 7.40 ground out/air out ratio and boys of steel conspired to craft the lowest-ever ERA (0.54) in a 40-save (47-for-47) season.

2. KENLEY JANSEN, DODGERS

Jansen is 1-A. He blew six of his 53 save opportunities, a transgression offset by a 30-strikeout advantage on Britton. He punched out 2.97 batters for every one who got a hit off him — the game's highest ratio.

3. AROLDIS CHAPMAN, YANKEES

Twenty-one active pitchers have combined for 39 seasons of 40 or more saves. You might be surprised to know that Chapman is not among them. Then again, his aggregate of 181 since 2012 is second to Craig Kimbrel's 209, and he's the only one with four 100-strikeout campaigns.

4. CRAIG KIMBREL, RED SOX

Kimbrel missed as many barrels as ever in 2016, allowing a scant 4.8 hits while striking out 14.1 batters per nine. He also missed the strike zone more than ever (5.1 BBs/9). The career-high 3.40 ERA was misleading; subtract three outings — none of them in save situations — and it was 1.56.

5. MARK MELANCON, GIANTS

The Giants set a franchise record with 30 blown saves and played an NL-high 55 one-run games (losing 27) in 2016. Enter Melancon, whose 98 rescues for the 2015-16 Pirates and Nats are the fifth most in history over a two-year span. He gets it done, but 45 relievers fanned more batters in that period.

6. ROBERTO OSUNA, BLUE JAYS

Osuna — the youngest pitcher to appear for an AL team in 2016 — could probably start, but he's been just too indispensable on the back end. He's a respectable 56-for-65 in two years on the job, although his 16 HRs allowed in that stretch were the most by any current closer.

TIER 2

7. CODY ALLEN, INDIANS

Every pitcher in Tier 2 and lower is at some threat of not making it through the schedule as a closer, whether because of team depth (Andrew Miller, in Allen's case), physical peril, slender track record, trade rumors, age or general effectiveness questions. Allen's walk and home run rates could use some cleanup, but he's 10th in saves since May 30, 2014.

8. WADE DAVIS, CUBS

The only things mitigating against Tier 1 positioning for Davis are his elbow scare of last season and a set of teammates with the audacity to limit save opportunities by scoring too much. His career relief ERA of 1.51 is the lowest in Baseball Reference's database at a 250-IP minimum.

9. ALEX COLOME, RAYS

2015 AL save champ Brad Boxberger went down, and Colome stepped up. Save-less in his career, he coolly converted his first 21 chances, with his final sum of 37 including five of more than three outs. It was just one year, but it was a Tier 1 year.

10. DAVID ROBERTSON, WHITE SOX

Robertson gave us the most spectacular blown save of 2016, when he squandered a three-run lead to the Tigers by hacking up a trio of solo homers. Other than three other similarly catastrophic outings and his habit of going right to the brink, he survived a third 30-save season in a row.

11. A.J. RAMOS, MARLINS

The Marlins have never really seemed convinced that the ninth inning is Ramos' true calling, but he's made his case with 72 saves (including 33 straight at one point) since taking the job in mid-May of 2015. It's a good thing he keeps the ball in the park, because he's walked 4.7 men per 9 in his career.

12. SAM DYSON, RANGERS

When Shawn Tolleson perhaps not unexpectedly imploded from the get-go, the Rangers turned to Dyson, who had been basically a castoff by the Blue Jays and Marlins. In spite of sub-optimal hit and strikeout rates, he induced a lot of DPs and amassed more saves (38) than anyone except Jeurys Familia, Melancon and Britton after May 10.

13. FRANCISCO RODRIGUEZ, TIGERS

Watching Rodriguez, he sometimes looks like he's toast — but the kind that's palatable after you scrape off the black stuff. Any ensuing indigestion is from the 26 homers he's allowed the last three years. Nevertheless, armed with subterfuge in place of that legendary slider, the active saves leader gutted out 44 of them in 2016.

14. KELVIN HERRERA, ROYALS

With Davis departed, Herrera finally gets his chance to close after serving as one of the game's sturdiest bridge relievers. Beginning in 2012 through last July, his 2.39 ERA was 10th among bullpenners. Whether that will translate to higher leverage is the issue; early results late last summer were mixed.

AP Images

15. ANDREW MILLER, INDIANS

The first presumptive non-closer on the list, Miller is so prodigiously good that he can have a substantive impact on your ERA, WHIP and SO columns. (Dellin Betances and Chris Devenski are similar outliers.) Miller's three-year inventory is almost inconceivably good: 18 wins, 49 saves, a 1.82 ERA, 0.776 WHIP, 7.09 SO/BB ratio, 54.8% of his outs via the whiff.

16. EDWIN DIAZ, MARINERS

Mere contact was often an impossibility against Diaz, who consolidated his minor-league starter's repertoire to become the first big leaguer ever to strike out 24 batters in a nine-inning span. After becoming Seattle's closer in August, the rookie led both leagues with 18 saves — but with a sketchy 3.71 ERA.

17. SEUNG HWAN OH, CARDINALS

Trevor Rosenthal's stunning fall from grace opened the door for Oh — the 34-year-old all-time saves leader in Korea — to conquer another nation. Only four pitchers matched his saves (19), ERA (2.27) and WHIP (0.958) triumvirate after July 1.

18. KEN GILES, ASTROS

Houston's bold trade of prospects to Philly for Giles looked foolish until Giles turned things around in his last 36 appearances, eventually graduating from setup man to closer. Save one implosion, his ERA was 1.50 in that stretch, and bat-on-ball was almost accidental.

19. TONY WATSON, PIRATES

The Pirates' wager that they could seamlessly replace Melancon (dealt to the Nats) with Watson was less than a push. Fifteen saves in two months are a lot, but they were tainted by four blows or losses, six homers in 23.1 innings and a procession of scary moments. The long-time setup ace is better than that.

TIER 3

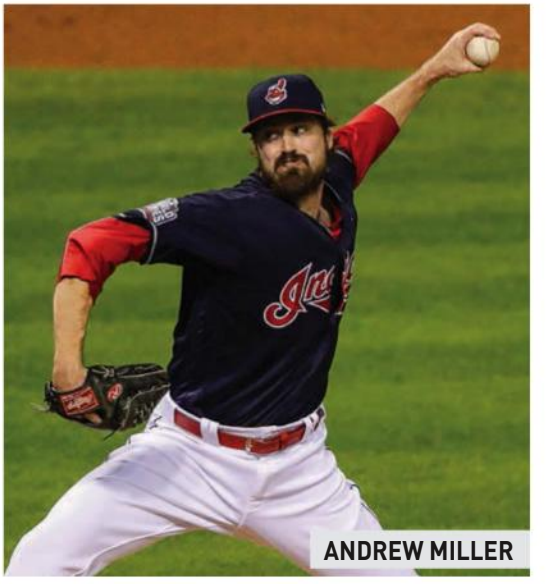
20. JEURYS FAMILIA, METS

With a suspension of indeterminate length looming, Familia plunges out of Tier 1 to a ranking that presumes a half-season of his usual exemplary closing work. He was, in 2016, the 13th pitcher to save 50 games in a season; but after converting 52 in a row, he went just 15-for-20.

21. Addison Reed, Mets
22. Shawn Kelley, Nationals
23. Raisel Iglesias, Reds
24. Dellin Betances, Yankees
25. Adam Ottavino, Rockies
26. Fernando Rodney, Diamondbacks
27. Chris Devenski, Astros
28. Cam Bedrosian, Angels (Z)
29. Sean Doolittle, Athletics
30. Hector Neris, Phillies
31. Jim Johnson, Braves
32. Ryan Madson, Athletics
33. Brandon Maurer, Padres
34. Huston Street, Angels
35. Brandon Kintzler, Twins
36. Corey Knebel, Brewers

TIER 4

37. Carter Capps, Padres
38. Nate Jones, White Sox
39. Luke Gregerson, Astros
40. Brad Brach, Orioles
44. Matt Bush, Rangers
42. Hector Rondon, Cubs
43. Arodys Vizcaino, Braves
41. Jeremy Jeffress, Rangers
45. Ryan Buchter, Padres
46. Brad Ziegler, Marlins
47. Brad Boxberger, Rays
48. Kyle Barraclough, Marlins
49. Mauricio Cabrera, Braves
50. David Phelps, Marlins



ANDREW MILLER

Closer Depth Chart

Team	Plan A	Plan B	Plan C
Arizona Diamondbacks	Fernando Rodney	Jake Barrett	Enrique Burgos
Atlanta Braves	Jim Johnson	Arodys Vizcaino	Mauricio Cabrera
Baltimore Orioles	Zach Britton	Brad Brach	Darren O'Day
Boston Red Sox	Craig Kimbrel	Tyler Thornburg	Joe Kelly
Chicago Cubs	Wade Davis	Hector Rondon	Carl Edwards Jr.
Chicago White Sox	David Robertson	Nate Jones	Zach Putnam
Cincinnati Reds	Raisel Iglesias	Tony Cingrani	Jumbo Diaz
Cleveland Indians	Cody Allen	Andrew Miller	Bryan Shaw
Colorado Rockies	Adam Ottavino	Jake McGee	Carlos Estevez
Detroit Tigers	Francisco Rodriguez	Bruce Rondon	Joe Jimenez
Houston Astros	Ken Giles	Luke Gregerson	Will Harris
Kansas City Royals	Kelvin Herrera	Joakim Soria	Matt Strahm
Los Angeles Angels	Huston Street	Cam Bedrosian	Andrew Bailey
Los Angeles Dodgers	Kenley Jansen	Pedro Baez	Grant Dayton
Miami Marlins	A.J. Ramos	Brad Ziegler	Kyle Barraclough
Milwaukee Brewers	Corey Knebel	Carlos Torres	Jacob Barnes
Minnesota Twins	Brandon Kintzler	Ryan Pressly	Trevor May
New York Mets	Addison Reed	Hansel Robles	Erik Goeddel
New York Yankees	Aroldis Chapman	Dellin Betances	Tyler Clippard
Oakland Athletics	Sean Doolittle	Ryan Madson	Ryan Dull
Philadelphia Phillies	Hector Neris	Joaquin Benoit	Jeanmar Gomez
Pittsburgh Pirates	Tony Watson	Felipe Rivero	Antonio Bastardo
San Diego Padres	Brandon Maurer	Carter Capps	Ryan Buchter
San Francisco Giants	Mark Melancon	Hunter Strickland	Derek Law
Seattle Mariners	Edwin Diaz	Steve Cishek	Dan Altavilla
St. Louis Cardinals	Seung Hwan Oh	Trevor Rosenthal	Brett Cecil
Tampa Bay Rays	Alex Colome	Brad Boxberger	Ryne Stanek
Texas Rangers	Sam Dyson	Matt Bush	Jeremy Jeffress
Toronto Blue Jays	Roberto Osuna	Jason Grilli	Joe Biagini
Washington Nationals	Shawn Kelley	Sammy Solis	Koda Glover

American League Batting Stats

BATTING AVERAGE

	PLAYER	TEAM	AVG
1.	Jose Altuve	HOU	.338
2.	Mookie Betts	BOS	.318
2.	Dustin Pedroia	BOS	.318
4.	Miguel Cabrera	DET	.316
5.	David Ortiz	BOS	.315
5.	Mike Trout	LAA	.315
7.	Jose Ramirez	CLE	.312
8.	J.D. Martinez	DET	.307
9.	Yunel Escobar	LAA	.304
10.	Elvis Andrus	TEX	.302
11.	Francisco Lindor	CLE	.301
12.	Adrian Beltre	TEX	.300
13.	Robinson Cano	SEA	.298
14.	Melky Cabrera	CHW	.296
15.	Carlos Beltran	TOT	.295
16.	Xander Bogaerts	BOS	.294
16.	Manny Machado	BAL	.294
18.	Jose Abreu	CHW	.293
19.	Victor Martinez	DET	.289
20.	Ian Kinsler	DET	.288
21.	Nelson Cruz	SEA	.287
21.	Danny Valencia	OAK	.287
23.	Hanley Ramirez	BOS	.286
24.	Ian Desmond	TEX	.285
25.	Josh Donaldson	TOR	.284
25.	Adam Eaton	CHW	.284
27.	Kyle Seager	SEA	.278
28.	Didi Gregorius	NYY	.276
29.	Jason Kipnis	CLE	.275
30.	Carlos Correa	HOU	.274
30.	Cheslor Cuthbert	KCR	.274

ON-BASE PERCENTAGE

	PLAYER	TEAM	OBP
1.	Mike Trout	LAA	.441
2.	Josh Donaldson	TOR	.404
3.	David Ortiz	BOS	.401
4.	Jose Altuve	HOU	.396
5.	Miguel Cabrera	DET	.393
6.	Dustin Pedroia	BOS	.376
7.	J.D. Martinez	DET	.373
8.	Carlos Santana	CLE	.366
8.	Jose Bautista	TOR	.366
10.	Mookie Betts	BOS	.363
10.	Jose Ramirez	CLE	.363
10.	Joe Mauer	MIN	.363
13.	Elvis Andrus	TEX	.362
13.	Adam Eaton	CHW	.362
15.	Hanley Ramirez	BOS	.361
15.	Carlos Correa	HOU	.361
17.	Nelson Cruz	SEA	.360
18.	Kyle Seager	SEA	.359
18.	George Springer	HOU	.359
20.	Francisco Lindor	CLE	.358
20.	Adrian Beltre	TEX	.358
22.	Edwin Encarnacion	TOR	.357
23.	Xander Bogaerts	BOS	.356
24.	Yunel Escobar	LAA	.355
25.	Jose Abreu	CHW	.353
26.	Victor Martinez	DET	.351
26.	Brett Gardner	NYY	.351
28.	Robinson Cano	SEA	.350
29.	Jackie Bradley	BOS	.349
30.	Ian Kinsler	DET	.348
30.	Kole Calhoun	LAA	.348

SLUGGING

	PLAYER	TEAM	SLG
1.	David Ortiz	BOS	.620
2.	Miguel Cabrera	DET	.563
3.	Nelson Cruz	SEA	.555
4.	Mike Trout	LAA	.550
5.	Josh Donaldson	TOR	.549
6.	Brian Dozier	MIN	.546
7.	J.D. Martinez	DET	.535
8.	Mookie Betts	BOS	.534
9.	Robinson Cano	SEA	.533
9.	Manny Machado	BAL	.533
9.	Mark Trumbo	BAL	.533
12.	Jose Altuve	HOU	.531
13.	Edwin Encarnacion	TOR	.529
14.	Khris Davis	OAK	.524
15.	Adrian Beltre	TEX	.521
15.	Evan Longoria	TBR	.521
17.	Carlos Beltran	TOT	.513
18.	Hanley Ramirez	BOS	.505
19.	Rougned Odor	TEX	.502
20.	Kyle Seager	SEA	.499
21.	Carlos Santana	CLE	.498
22.	Jackie Bradley	BOS	.486
23.	Ian Kinsler	DET	.484
24.	Brad Miller	TBR	.482
25.	Michael Saunders	TOR	.478
26.	Victor Martinez	DET	.476
27.	Jason Kipnis	CLE	.469
27.	Corey Dickerson	TBR	.469
29.	Jose Abreu	CHW	.468
29.	Kendrys Morales	KCR	.468

OPS

	PLAYER	TEAM	OPS
1.	David Ortiz	BOS	1.021
2.	Mike Trout	LAA	.991
3.	Miguel Cabrera	DET	.956
4.	Josh Donaldson	TOR	.953
5.	Jose Altuve	HOU	.928
6.	Nelson Cruz	SEA	.915
7.	J.D. Martinez	DET	.908
8.	Mookie Betts	BOS	.897
9.	Brian Dozier	MIN	.886
9.	Edwin Encarnacion	TOR	.886
11.	Robinson Cano	SEA	.882
12.	Adrian Beltre	TEX	.879
13.	Manny Machado	BAL	.876
14.	Hanley Ramirez	BOS	.866
15.	Carlos Santana	CLE	.865
16.	Kyle Seager	SEA	.859
17.	Mark Trumbo	BAL	.850
17.	Carlos Beltran	TOT	.850
19.	Evan Longoria	TBR	.840
20.	Jackie Bradley	BOS	.835
21.	Khris Davis	OAK	.831
22.	Ian Kinsler	DET	.831
23.	Victor Martinez	DET	.826
24.	Jose Ramirez	CLE	.825
24.	Dustin Pedroia	BOS	.825
26.	Jose Abreu	CHW	.820
27.	Jose Bautista	TOR	.817
28.	Michael Saunders	TOR	.815
28.	George Springer	HOU	.815
30.	Jason Kipnis	CLE	.811
30.	Carlos Correa	HOU	.811

RUNS

	PLAYER	TEAM	RUNS
1.	Mike Trout	LAA	123
2.	Mookie Betts	BOS	122
2.	Josh Donaldson	TOR	122
4.	Ian Kinsler	DET	117
5.	George Springer	HOU	116
6.	Xander Bogaerts	BOS	115
7.	Jose Altuve	HOU	108
8.	Robinson Cano	SEA	107
8.	Ian Desmond	TEX	107
10.	Manny Machado	BAL	105
10.	Dustin Pedroia	BOS	105
12.	Brian Dozier	MIN	104
13.	Francisco Lindor	CLE	99
13.	Edwin Encarnacion	TOR	99
15.	Chris Davis	BAL	99
16.	Nelson Cruz	SEA	96
17.	Mark Trumbo	BAL	94
17.	Jackie Bradley	BOS	94
19.	Miguel Cabrera	DET	92
19.	Mike Napoli	CLE	92
21.	Adam Eaton	CHW	91
21.	Jason Kipnis	CLE	91
21.	Kole Calhoun	LAA	91
24.	Rougned Odor	TEX	89
24.	Kyle Seager	SEA	89
24.	Todd Frazier	CHW	89
24.	Adrian Beltre	TEX	89
24.	Carlos Santana	CLE	89
29.	Adam Jones	BAL	86
30.	Khris Davis	OAK	85

HOME RUNS

	PLAYER	TEAM	HR
1.	Mark Trumbo	BAL	47
2.	Nelson Cruz	SEA	43
3.	Khris Davis	OAK	42
3.	Brian Dozier	MIN	42
3.	Edwin Encarnacion	TOR	42
6.	Todd Frazier	CHW	40
7.	Robinson Cano	SEA	39
8.	Miguel Cabrera	DET	38
8.	Chris Davis	BAL	38
8.	David Ortiz	BOS	38
11.	Josh Donaldson	TOR	37
11.	Manny Machado	BAL	37
13.	Evan Longoria	TBR	36
14.	Mike Napoli	CLE	34
14.	Carlos Santana	CLE	34
16.	Rougned Odor	TEX	33
17.	Adrian Beltre	TEX	32
17.	Evan Gattis	HOU	32
19.	Mookie Betts	BOS	31
19.	Albert Pujols	LAA	31
19.	Justin Upton	DET	31
22.	Brad Miller	TBR	30
22.	Kendrys Morales	KCR	30
22.	Hanley Ramirez	BOS	30
22.	Kyle Seager	SEA	30
26.	Carlos Beltran	TOT	29
26.	Adam Jones	BAL	29
26.	George Springer	HOU	29
26.	Mike Trout	LAA	29
30.	Ian Kinsler	DET	28

RUNS BATTED IN

	PLAYER	TEAM	RBI
1.	Edwin Encarnacion	TOR	127
1.	David Ortiz	BOS	127
3.	Albert Pujols	LAA	119
4.	Mookie Betts	BOS	113
5.	Hanley Ramirez	BOS	111
6.	Mark Trumbo	BAL	108
6.	Miguel Cabrera	DET	108
8.	Nelson Cruz	SEA	105
9.	Adrian Beltre	TEX	104
9.	Eric Hosmer	KCR	104
11.	Robinson Cano	SEA	103
12.	Khris Davis	OAK	102
13.	Mike Napoli	CLE	101
14.	Mike Trout	LAA	100
14.	Jose Abreu	CHW	100
16.	Brian Dozier	MIN	99
16.	Josh Donaldson	TOR	99
16.	Kyle Seager	SEA	99
19.	Todd Frazier	CHW	98
19.	Evan Longoria	TBR	98
21.	Manny Machado	BAL	96
21.	Jose Altuve	HOU	96
21.	Carlos Correa	HOU	96
24.	Kendrys Morales	KCR	93
24.	Carlos Beltran	TOT	93
26.	Xander Bogaerts	BOS	89
27.	Rougned Odor	TEX	88
28.	Carlos Santana	CLE	87
28.	Justin Upton	DET	87
28.	Jackie Bradley	BOS	87

STOLEN BASES

	PLAYER	TEAM	SB
1.	Rajai Davis	CLE	43
2.	Mike Trout	LAA	30
3.	Jose Altuve	HOU	30
4.	Jarrod Dyson	KCR	30
5.	Eduardo Nunez	MIN	27
6.	Mookie Betts	BOS	26
7.	Elvis Andrus	TEX	24
8.	Leonys Martin	SEA	24
9.	Jose Ramirez	CLE	22
10.	Ian Desmond	TEX	21
11.	Kevin Kiermaier	TBR	21
12.	Jacoby Ellsbury	NYY	20
13.	Francisco Lindor	CLE	19
14.	Brian Dozier	MIN	18
15.	Carlos Gomez	TOT	18
16.	Alcides Escobar	KCR	17
17.	Billy Burns	TOT	17
18.	Brett Gardner	NYY	16
19.	Todd Frazier	CHW	15
20.	Jason Kipnis	CLE	15
21.	Cameron Maybin	DET	15
22.	Rougned Odor	TEX	14
23.	Ian Kinsler	DET	14
24.	Adam Eaton	CHW	14
25.	Lorenzo Cain	KCR	14
26.	Kevin Pillar	TOR	14
27.	Paulo Orlando	KCR	14
28.	Carlos Correa	HOU	13
29.	Xander Bogaerts	BOS	13
30.	Marwin Gonzalez	HOU	12
30.	Danny Santana	MIN	12

PRESENTED BY:

American League Pitching Stats

WINS

	PLAYER	TEAM	WINS
1.	Rick Porcello	BOS	22
2.	J.A. Happ	TOR	20
3.	Corey Kluber	CLE	18
4.	David Price	BOS	17
4.	Chris Sale	CHW	17
6.	Hisashi Iwakuma	SEA	16
6.	Chris Tillman	BAL	16
6.	Justin Verlander	DET	16
9.	Cole Hamels	TEX	15
9.	Aaron Sanchez	TOR	15
11.	Masahiro Tanaka	NYY	14
12.	Collin McHugh	HOU	13
12.	Jose Quintana	CHW	13
12.	Hector Santiago	TOT	13
12.	Josh Tomlin	CLE	13
12.	Steven Wright	BOS	13
17.	Trevor Bauer	CLE	12
17.	Danny Duffy	KCR	12
17.	Doug Fister	HOU	12
17.	Jered Weaver	LAA	12
21.	Carlos Carrasco	CLE	11
21.	Mike Fiers	HOU	11
21.	Michael Fulmer	DET	11
21.	Felix Hernandez	SEA	11
21.	Ian Kennedy	KCR	11
21.	Danny Salazar	CLE	11
21.	Yordano Ventura	KCR	11
28.	Brad Brach	BAL	10
28.	Dylan Bundy	BAL	10
28.	R.A. Dickey	TOR	10
28.	Kendall Graveman	OAK	10
28.	Andrew Miller	TOT	10
28.	Jake Odorizzi	TBR	10
28.	Martin Perez	TEX	10
28.	Edinson Volquez	KCR	10

SAVES

	PLAYER	TEAM	SAVES
1.	Zach Britton	BAL	47
2.	Francisco Rodriguez	DET	44
3.	Sam Dyson	TEX	38
4.	David Robertson	CHW	37
4.	Alex Colome	TBR	37
6.	Roberto Osuna	TOR	36
7.	Cody Allen	CLE	32
8.	Craig Kimbrel	BOS	31
9.	Ryan Madson	OAK	30
10.	Wade Davis	KCR	27
11.	Steve Cishek	SEA	25
12.	Aroldis Chapman	NYY	20
13.	Edwin Diaz	SEA	18
14.	Brandon Kintzler	MIN	17
15.	Luke Gregerson	HOU	15
15.	Ken Giles	HOU	15
17.	Andrew Miller	TOT	12
17.	Dellin Betances	NYY	12
17.	Kelvin Herrera	KCR	12
17.	Will Harris	HOU	12
21.	Shawn Tolleson	TEX	11
22.	Huston Street	LAA	9
23.	Kevin Jepsen	TOT	7
23.	Koji Uehara	BOS	7
25.	Fernando Salas	LAA	6
25.	Joe Smith	LAA	6
25.	Andrew Bailey	LAA	6
28.	Jake Diekman	TEX	4
28.	Sean Doolittle	OAK	4
28.	Brad Ziegler	BOS	4

STRIKEOUTS

	PLAYER	TEAM	SO
1.	Justin Verlander	DET	254
2.	Chris Sale	CHW	233
2.	Chris Archer	TBR	233
4.	David Price	BOS	228
5.	Corey Kluber	CLE	227
6.	Michael Pineda	NYY	207
7.	Cole Hamels	TEX	200
8.	Rick Porcello	BOS	189
9.	Danny Duffy	KCR	188
10.	Ian Kennedy	KCR	184
11.	Jose Quintana	CHW	181
12.	Collin McHugh	HOU	177
13.	Kevin Gausman	BAL	174
14.	Trevor Bauer	CLE	168
14.	Carlos Rodon	CHW	168
16.	Drew Smyly	TBR	167
17.	Jake Odorizzi	TBR	166
17.	Marcus Stroman	TOR	166
19.	Masahiro Tanaka	NYY	165
19.	Marco Estrada	TOR	165
21.	J.A. Happ	TOR	163
22.	Aaron Sanchez	TOR	161
22.	Danny Salazar	CLE	161
24.	CC Sabathia	NYY	152
25.	Carlos Carrasco	CLE	150
26.	Ervin Santana	MIN	149
27.	Hisashi Iwakuma	SEA	147
28.	Hector Santiago	TOT	144
28.	Yordano Ventura	KCR	144
28.	Dallas Keuchel	HOU	144
28.	Ricky Nolasco	TOT	144

QUALITY STARTS

	PLAYER	TEAM	QS
1.	Justin Verlander	DET	27
2.	Rick Porcello	BOS	26
3.	Jose Quintana	CHW	23
3	Chris Sale	CHW	23
3.	Aaron Sanchez	TOR	23
6.	Cole Hamels	TEX	22
6.	Corey Kluber	CLE	22
6.	David Price	BOS	22
9.	J.A. Happ	TOR	21
10.	Chris Archer	TBR	19
10.	Hisashi Iwakuma	SEA	19
10.	Martin Perez	TEX	19
10.	Masahiro Tanaka	NYY	19
14.	Marco Estrada	TOR	18
14.	Kevin Gausman	BAL	18
14.	Marcus Stroman	TOR	18
17.	Jake Odorizzi	TBR	17
17.	Carlos Rodon	CHW	17
17.	Ervin Santana	MIN	17
17.	Josh Tomlin	CLE	17
21.	Trevor Bauer	CLE	16
21.	Danny Duffy	KCR	16
21.	Doug Fister	HOU	16
21.	Kendall Graveman	OAK	16
21.	Dallas Keuchel	HOU	16
21.	Collin McHugh	HOU	16
21.	Ricky Nolasco	TOT	16
21.	CC Sabathia	NYY	16
21.	Matt Shoemaker	LAA	16
21.	Chris Tillman	BAL	16
21.	Yordano Ventura	KCR	16

ERA

	PLAYER	TEAM	ERA
1.	Aaron Sanchez	TOR	3.00
2.	Justin Verlander	DET	3.04
3.	Masahiro Tanaka	NYY	3.07
4.	Corey Kluber	CLE	3.14
5.	Rick Porcello	BOS	3.15
6.	J.A. Happ	TOR	3.18
7.	Jose Quintana	CHW	3.20
8.	Cole Hamels	TEX	3.32
9.	Chris Sale	CHW	3.34
10.	Ervin Santana	MIN	3.38
11.	Marco Estrada	TOR	3.48
12.	Danny Duffy	KCR	3.51
13.	Kevin Gausman	BAL	3.61
14.	Ian Kennedy	KCR	3.68
15.	Jake Odorizzi	TBR	3.69
16.	Chris Tillman	BAL	3.77
17.	CC Sabathia	NYY	3.91
18.	David Price	BOS	3.99
19.	Chris Archer	TBR	4.02
20.	Carlos Rodon	CHW	4.04
21.	Kendall Graveman	OAK	4.11
22.	Hisashi Iwakuma	SEA	4.12
23.	Trevor Bauer	CLE	4.26
24.	Collin McHugh	HOU	4.34
25.	Marcus Stroman	TOR	4.37
26.	Martin Perez	TEX	4.39
27.	Josh Tomlin	CLE	4.40
28.	Ricky Nolasco	TOT	4.42
29.	Yordano Ventura	KCR	4.45
30.	R.A. Dickey	TOR	4.46

WHIP

	PLAYER	TEAM	WHIP
1.	Justin Verlander	DET	1.001
2.	Rick Porcello	BOS	1.009
3.	Chris Sale	CHW	1.037
4.	Corey Kluber	CLE	1.056
5.	Masahiro Tanaka	NYY	1.077
6.	Marco Estrada	TOR	1.119
7.	Danny Duffy	KCR	1.141
8.	Jose Quintana	CHW	1.163
9.	Aaron Sanchez	TOR	1.167
10.	J.A. Happ	TOR	1.169
11.	Josh Tomlin	CLE	1.190
12.	Jake Odorizzi	TBR	1.194
13.	David Price	BOS	1.204
14.	Ervin Santana	MIN	1.219
15.	Ian Kennedy	KCR	1.221
16.	Chris Archer	TBR	1.242
17.	Ricky Nolasco	TOT	1.245
18.	Drew Smyly	TBR	1.272
19.	Kevin Gausman	BAL	1.28
20.	Chris Tillman	BAL	1.285
21.	Dallas Keuchel	HOU	1.286
22.	Marcus Stroman	TOR	1.289
23.	Kendall Graveman	OAK	1.306
23.	Cole Hamels	TEX	1.306
25.	Trevor Bauer	CLE	1.311
26.	CC Sabathia	NYY	1.319
27.	Hisashi Iwakuma	SEA	1.327
28.	Michael Pineda	NYY	1.349
29.	Mike Fiers	HOU	1.358
30.	Hector Santiago	TOT	1.363

HOLDS

	PLAYER	TEAM	HOLDS
1.	Dellin Betances	NYY	28
1.	Will Harris	HOU	28
1.	Nate Jones	CHW	28
4.	Jake Diekman	TEX	26
4	Kelvin Herrera	KCR	26
6.	Andrew Miller	TOT	25
6.	Bryan Shaw	CLE	25
6.	Justin Wilson	DET	25
9.	Brad Brach	BAL	24
10.	Matt Bush	TEX	22
11.	Jason Grilli	TOR	21
12.	Zach Duke	CHW	20
12.	Joakim Soria	KCR	20
14.	Xavier Cedeno	TBR	19
15.	Joaquin Benoit	TOT	18
15.	Ken Giles	HOU	18
15.	Pat Neshek	HOU	18
15.	Koji Uehara	BOS	18
19.	Nick Vincent	SEA	17
20.	Matt Barnes	BOS	16
20.	Shane Greene	DET	16
20.	Junichi Tazawa	BOS	16
23.	John Axford	OAK	15
23.	Tony Barnette	TEX	15
23.	Ryan Dull	OAK	15
23.	Luke Gregerson	HOU	15
23.	Keone Kela	TEX	15
23.	Erasmo Ramirez	TBR	15
29.	Luke Hochevar	KCR	14
29.	Alex Wilson	DET	14

HR/9 IP

	PLAYER	TEAM	HR/9
1.	Aaron Sanchez	TOR	0.70
2.	Martin Perez	TEX	0.82
3.	Corey Kluber	CLE	0.92
4.	Rick Porcello	BOS	0.93
5.	Marcus Stroman	TOR	0.93
6.	Ervin Santana	MIN	0.94
7.	Jose Quintana	CWS	0.95
8.	Trevor Bauer	CLE	0.95
9.	Masahiro Tanaka	NYY	0.99
10.	Chris Tillman	BAL	0.99
11.	J.A. Happ	TOR	1.02
12.	Kendall Graveman	OAK	1.06
13.	Chris Sale	CWS	1.07
14.	Dallas Keuchel	HOU	1.07
15.	Cole Hamels	TEX	1.08
16.	Yordano Ventura	KC	1.11
17.	David Price	BOS	1.17
18.	Marco Estrada	TOR	1.18
19.	Justin Verlander	DET	1.19
20.	Collin McHugh	HOU	1.22
21.	Carlos Rodon	CWS	1.25
22.	Hisashi Iwakuma	SEA	1.27
23.	Chris Archer	TB	1.34
24.	Danny Duffy	KC	1.35
25.	Michael Pineda	NYY	1.38
26.	Jake Odorizzi	TB	1.39
27.	Mike Fiers	HOU	1.39
28.	Kevin Gausman	BAL	1.40
29.	Ian Kennedy	KC	1.52
30.	Drew Smyly	TB	1.64

National League Batting Stats

BATTING AVERAGE

	PLAYER	TEAM	AVG
1.	DJ LeMahieu	COL	.348
2.	Daniel Murphy	WSN	.347
3.	Joey Votto	CIN	.326
4.	Charlie Blackmon	COL	.324
5.	Jean Segura	ARI	.319
6.	Starling Marte	PIT	.311
7.	Corey Seager	LAD	.308
8.	Yadier Molina	STL	.307
8.	Wilson Ramos	WSN	.307
10.	Ryan Braun	MIL	.305
10.	Martin Prado	MIA	.305
12.	J.T. Realmuto	MIA	.303
13.	Freddie Freeman	ATL	.302
14.	Carlos Gonzalez	COL	.298
14.	Christian Yelich	MIA	.298
16.	Paul Goldschmidt	ARI	.297
17.	Nolan Arenado	COL	.294
17.	Cesar Hernandez	PHI	.294
19.	Kris Bryant	CHC	.292
19.	Anthony Rizzo	CHC	.292
21.	Ender Inciarte	ATL	.291
21.	Brandon Phillips	CIN	.291
23.	Buster Posey	SFG	.288
24.	Odubel Herrera	PHI	.286
25.	Adrian Gonzalez	LAD	.285
25.	Jonathan Villar	MIL	.285
27.	Josh Harrison	PIT	.283
28.	Asdrubal Cabrera	NYM	.280
28.	Yoenis Cespedes	NYM	.280
30.	Angel Pagan	SFG	.277

ON-BASE PERCENTAGE

	PLAYER	TEAM	OBP
1.	Joey Votto	CIN	.434
2.	DJ LeMahieu	COL	.416
3.	Paul Goldschmidt	ARI	.411
4.	Freddie Freeman	ATL	.400
5.	Brandon Belt	SFG	.394
6.	Dexter Fowler	CHC	.393
7.	Daniel Murphy	WSN	.390
8.	Ben Zobrist	CHC	.386
9.	Kris Bryant	CHC	.385
9.	Anthony Rizzo	CHC	.385
11.	Charlie Blackmon	COL	.381
12.	Matt Carpenter	STL	.380
13.	Christian Yelich	MIA	.376
14.	Bryce Harper	WSN	.373
15.	Cesar Hernandez	PHI	.371
16.	Jonathan Villar	MIL	.369
17.	Jean Segura	ARI	.368
18.	Corey Seager	LAD	.365
18.	Ryan Braun	MIL	.365
20.	Starling Marte	PIT	.362
20.	Nolan Arenado	COL	.362
20.	Buster Posey	SFG	.362
23.	Odubel Herrera	PHI	.361
24.	Yadier Molina	STL	.360
25.	Martin Prado	MIA	.359
26.	Wilson Ramos	WSN	.354
26.	Yoenis Cespedes	NYM	.354
28.	Ender Inciarte	ATL	.351
29.	Carlos Gonzalez	COL	.350
30.	Adrian Gonzalez	LAD	.349

SLUGGING

	PLAYER	TEAM	SLG
1.	Daniel Murphy	WSN	.595
2.	Nolan Arenado	COL	.570
3.	Freddie Freeman	ATL	.569
4.	Kris Bryant	CHC	.554
5.	Charlie Blackmon	COL	.552
6.	Joey Votto	CIN	.550
7.	Anthony Rizzo	CHC	.544
8.	Ryan Braun	MIL	.538
9.	Yoenis Cespedes	NYM	.530
10.	Corey Seager	LAD	.512
11.	Jake Lamb	ARI	.509
12.	Yasmany Tomas	ARI	.508
13.	Jay Bruce	TOT	.506
14.	Matt Carpenter	STL	.505
14.	Carlos Gonzalez	COL	.505
16.	Jean Segura	ARI	.499
16.	Chris Carter	MIL	.499
16.	Matt Kemp	TOT	.499
19.	Adam Duvall	CIN	.498
20.	Wilson Ramos	WSN	.496
21.	DJ LeMahieu	COL	.495
22.	Justin Turner	LAD	.493
23.	Paul Goldschmidt	ARI	.489
24.	Christian Yelich	MIA	.483
25.	Brandon Belt	SFG	.474
25.	Asdrubal Cabrera	NYM	.474
27.	Curtis Granderson	NYM	.464
28.	Gregory Polanco	PIT	.463
29.	Wil Myers	SDP	.461
30.	Jonathan Villar	MIL	.457
30.	Stephen Piscotty	STL	.457

OPS

	PLAYER	TEAM	OPS
1.	Daniel Murphy	WSN	.985
1.	Joey Votto	CIN	.985
3.	Freddie Freeman	ATL	.968
4.	Kris Bryant	CHC	.939
5.	Charlie Blackmon	COL	.933
6.	Nolan Arenado	COL	.932
7.	Anthony Rizzo	CHC	.928
8.	DJ LeMahieu	COL	.911
9.	Ryan Braun	MIL	.903
10.	Paul Goldschmidt	ARI	.899
11.	Matt Carpenter	STL	.885
12.	Yoenis Cespedes	NYM	.884
13.	Corey Seager	LAD	.877
14.	Brandon Belt	SFG	.868
15.	Jean Segura	ARI	.867
16.	Christian Yelich	MIA	.859
17.	Carlos Gonzalez	COL	.855
18.	Wilson Ramos	WSN	.850
19.	Jake Lamb	ARI	.840
20.	Dexter Fowler	CHC	.840
21.	Justin Turner	LAD	.832
22.	Ben Zobrist	CHC	.831
23.	Jonathan Villar	MIL	.826
24.	Chris Carter	MIL	.821
25.	Yasmany Tomas	ARI	.820
26.	Starling Marte	PIT	.818
27.	Jay Bruce	TOT	.815
28.	Bryce Harper	WSN	.814
29.	Asdrubal Cabrera	NYM	.810
30.	Matt Kemp	TOT	.803

RUNS

	PLAYER	TEAM	RUNS
1.	Kris Bryant	CHC	121
2.	Nolan Arenado	COL	116
3.	Charlie Blackmon	COL	111
4.	Paul Goldschmidt	ARI	106
5.	Corey Seager	LAD	105
6.	DJ LeMahieu	COL	104
7.	Freddie Freeman	ATL	102
7.	Jean Segura	ARI	102
9.	Joey Votto	CIN	101
10.	Wil Myers	SDP	99
11.	Anthony Rizzo	CHC	94
11.	Ben Zobrist	CHC	94
13.	Jonathan Villar	MIL	92
14.	Anthony Rendon	WSN	91
15.	Matt Kemp	TOT	89
16.	Daniel Murphy	WSN	88
16.	Curtis Granderson	NYM	88
18.	Carlos Gonzalez	COL	87
18.	Odubel Herrera	PHI	87
20.	Stephen Piscotty	STL	86
21.	Adam Duvall	CIN	85
21.	Ender Inciarte	ATL	85
23.	Dexter Fowler	CHC	84
23.	Chris Carter	MIL	84
23.	Bryce Harper	WSN	84
23.	Jayson Werth	WSN	84
27.	Buster Posey	SFG	82
28.	Matt Carpenter	STL	81
28.	Jake Lamb	ARI	81
28.	Andrew McCutchen	PIT	81

HOME RUNS

	PLAYER	TEAM	HR
1.	Nolan Arenado	COL	41
1.	Chris Carter	MIL	41
3.	Kris Bryant	CHC	39
4.	Matt Kemp	TOT	35
5.	Freddie Freeman	ATL	34
6.	Jay Bruce	TOT	33
6.	Adam Duvall	CIN	33
8.	Anthony Rizzo	CHC	32
9.	Yoenis Cespedes	NYM	31
9.	Yasmany Tomas	ARI	31
11.	Ryan Braun	MIL	30
11.	Curtis Granderson	NYM	30
11.	Jedd Gyorko	STL	30
14.	Charlie Blackmon	COL	29
14.	Jake Lamb	ARI	29
14.	Joey Votto	CIN	29
17.	Brandon Moss	STL	28
17.	Wil Myers	SDP	28
19.	Yasmani Grandal	LAD	27
19.	Giancarlo Stanton	MIA	27
19.	Trevor Story	COL	27
19.	Justin Turner	LAD	27
23.	Corey Seager	LAD	26
24.	Maikel Franco	PHI	25
24.	Carlos Gonzalez	COL	25
24.	Ryan Howard	PHI	25
24.	Daniel Murphy	WSN	25
24.	Joc Pederson	LAD	25
29.	Danny Espinosa	WSN	24
29.	Paul Goldschmidt	ARI	24
29.	Randal Grichuk	STL	24
29.	Bryce Harper	WSN	24
29.	Andrew McCutchen	PIT	24

RUNS BATTED IN

	PLAYER	TEAM	RBI
1.	Nolan Arenado	COL	133
2.	Anthony Rizzo	CHC	109
3.	Matt Kemp	TOT	108
4.	Daniel Murphy	WSN	104
5.	Adam Duvall	CIN	103
6.	Kris Bryant	CHC	102
7.	Carlos Gonzalez	COL	100
8.	Jay Bruce	TOT	99
9.	Christian Yelich	MIA	98
10.	Joey Votto	CIN	97
11.	Paul Goldschmidt	ARI	95
11.	Addison Russell	CHC	95
13.	Chris Carter	MIL	94
13.	Wil Myers	SDP	94
15.	Freddie Freeman	ATL	91
15.	Ryan Braun	MIL	91
15.	Jake Lamb	ARI	91
18.	Justin Turner	LAD	90
18.	Adrian Gonzalez	LAD	90
20.	Nick Markakis	ATL	89
21.	Maikel Franco	PHI	88
22.	Yoenis Cespedes	NYM	86
22.	Bryce Harper	WSN	86
22.	Gregory Polanco	PIT	86
25.	Stephen Piscotty	STL	85
25.	Anthony Rendon	WSN	85
27.	Brandon Crawford	SFG	84
28.	Yasmany Tomas	ARI	83
29.	Charlie Blackmon	COL	82
29.	Brandon Belt	SFG	82

STOLEN BASES

	PLAYER	TEAM	SB
1.	Jonathan Villar	MIL	62
2.	Billy Hamilton	CIN	58
3.	Starling Marte	PIT	47
4.	Hernan Perez	MIL	34
5.	Jean Segura	ARI	33
5.	Trea Turner	WSN	33
7.	Paul Goldschmidt	ARI	32
8.	Dee Gordon	MIA	30
8.	Travis Jankowski	SDP	30
10.	Wil Myers	SDP	28
11.	Odubel Herrera	PHI	25
12.	Keon Broxton	MIL	23
13.	Bryce Harper	WSN	21
13.	Chris Owings	ARI	21
13.	Jose Peraza	CIN	21
16.	Melvin Upton	SDP	20
17.	Josh Harrison	PIT	19
18.	Gregory Polanco	PIT	17
18.	Charlie Blackmon	COL	17
18.	Freddy Galvis	PHI	17
18.	Cesar Hernandez	PHI	17
22.	Ryan Braun	MIL	16
22.	Ender Inciarte	ATL	16
22.	Mallex Smith	ATL	16
25.	Angel Pagan	SFG	15
26.	Brandon Phillips	CIN	14
26.	Ben Revere	WSN	14
26.	Michael Taylor	WSN	14
29.	Dexter Fowler	CHC	13
29.	Michael Bourn	ARI	13
29.	Eduardo Nunez	SFG	13

PRESENTED BY:

National League Pitching Stats

WINS

	PLAYER	TEAM	WINS
1.	Max Scherzer	WSN	20
2.	Jon Lester	CHC	19
3.	Johnny Cueto	SFG	18
3.	Jake Arrieta	CHC	18
5.	Jose Fernandez	MIA	16
5.	Tanner Roark	WSN	16
5.	Carlos Martinez	STL	16
5.	Kyle Hendricks	CHC	16
5.	Kenta Maeda	LAD	16
10.	Stephen Strasburg	WSN	15
10.	Madison Bumgarner	SFG	15
10.	Bartolo Colon	NYM	15
10.	Jason Hammel	CHC	15
14.	Noah Syndergaard	NYM	14
14.	Chad Bettis	COL	14
14.	Dan Straily	CIN	14
17.	Adam Wainwright	STL	13
17.	Zack Greinke	ARI	13
19.	Clayton Kershaw	LAD	12
19.	Tyler Chatwood	COL	12
19.	Jeff Samardzija	SFG	12
19.	Jeremy Hellickson	PHI	12
23.	Gio Gonzalez	WSN	11
23.	John Lackey	CHC	11
23.	Zach Davies	MIL	11
23.	Jerad Eickhoff	PHI	11
27.	Jon Gray	COL	10
27.	Juan Nicasio	PIT	10
27.	Scott Kazmir	LAD	10
27.	Jaime Garcia	STL	10
27.	Brandon Finnegan	CIN	10

SAVES

	PLAYER	TEAM	SAVES
1.	Jeurys Familia	NYM	51
2.	Kenley Jansen	LAD	47
2.	Mark Melancon	TOT	47
4.	A.J. Ramos	MIA	40
5.	Jeanmar Gomez	PHI	37
6.	Santiago Casilla	SFG	31
7.	Jeremy Jeffress	MIL	27
8.	Fernando Rodney	TOT	25
9.	Jim Johnson	ATL	20
10.	Seung-hwan Oh	STL	19
10.	Jonathan Papelbon	WSN	19
12.	Brad Ziegler	ARI	18
12.	Hector Rondon	CHC	18
14.	Tony Cingrani	CIN	17
15.	Aroldis Chapman	CHC	16
16.	Tony Watson	PIT	15
16.	Jake McGee	COL	15
18.	Trevor Rosenthal	STL	14
19.	Tyler Thornburg	MIL	13
19.	Brandon Maurer	SDP	13
21.	Carlos Estevez	COL	11
22.	Arodys Vizcaino	ATL	10
23.	Shawn Kelley	WSN	7
23.	Adam Ottavino	COL	7
25.	Mauricio Cabrera	ATL	6
25.	Raisel Iglesias	CIN	6
27.	Daniel Hudson	ARI	5
28.	David Phelps	MIA	4
28.	Jake Barrett	ARI	4
28.	Sergio Romo	SFG	4

STRIKEOUTS

	PLAYER	TEAM	SO
1.	Max Scherzer	WSN	284
2.	Jose Fernandez	MIA	253
3.	Madison Bumgarner	SFG	251
4.	Noah Syndergaard	NYM	218
4.	Robbie Ray	ARI	218
6.	Johnny Cueto	SFG	198
7.	Jon Lester	CHC	197
8.	Jake Arrieta	CHC	190
9.	Jon Gray	COL	185
10.	Stephen Strasburg	WSN	183
11.	John Lackey	CHC	180
12.	Kenta Maeda	LAD	179
13.	Carlos Martinez	STL	174
14.	Tanner Roark	WSN	172
14.	Clayton Kershaw	LAD	172
16.	Gio Gonzalez	WSN	171
17.	Kyle Hendricks	CHC	170
18.	Jeff Samardzija	SFG	167
18.	Jerad Eickhoff	PHI	167
18.	Julio Teheran	ATL	167
21.	Dan Straily	CIN	162
22.	Adam Wainwright	STL	161
23.	Jeremy Hellickson	PHI	154
24.	Vince Velasquez	PHI	152
25.	Jaime Garcia	STL	150
26.	Tom Koehler	MIA	147
27.	Brandon Finnegan	CIN	145
28.	Jason Hammel	CHC	144
29.	Archie Bradley	ARI	143
29.	Jacob deGrom	NYM	143

QUALITY STARTS

	PLAYER	TEAM	QS
1.	Jon Lester	CHC	26
1.	Max Scherzer	WSN	26
3.	Madison Bumgarner	SFG	25
4.	Johnny Cueto	SFG	22
4.	Tanner Roark	WSN	22
6.	Jerad Eickhoff	PHI	20
6.	Kyle Hendricks	CHC	20
6.	John Lackey	CHC	20
6.	Carlos Martinez	STL	20
6.	Dan Straily	CIN	20
6.	Noah Syndergaard	NYM	20
12.	Bartolo Colon	NYM	19
12.	Jose Fernandez	MIA	19
14.	Adam Wainwright	STL	18
15.	Jake Arrieta	CHC	17
15.	Chad Bettis	COL	17
15.	Jeremy Hellickson	PHI	17
15.	Clayton Kershaw	LAD	17
15.	Jeff Samardzija	SFG	17
20.	Jacob deGrom	NYM	16
20.	Gio Gonzalez	WSN	16
20.	Jon Gray	COL	16
20.	Zack Greinke	ARI	16
20.	Jason Hammel	CHC	16
20.	Tom Koehler	MIA	16
20.	Mike Leake	STL	16
20.	Julio Teheran	ATL	16
28.	Zach Davies	MIL	15
28.	Brandon Finnegan	CIN	15
28.	Stephen Strasburg	WSN	15
28.	Matt Wisler	ATL	15

ERA

	PLAYER	TEAM	ERA
1.	Kyle Hendricks	CHC	2.13
2.	Jon Lester	CHC	2.44
3.	Noah Syndergaard	NYM	2.60
4.	Madison Bumgarner	SFG	2.74
5.	Johnny Cueto	SFG	2.79
6.	Tanner Roark	WSN	2.83
7.	Jose Fernandez	MIA	2.86
8.	Max Scherzer	WSN	2.96
9.	Carlos Martinez	STL	3.04
10.	Jake Arrieta	CHC	3.10
11.	Julio Teheran	ATL	3.21
12.	John Lackey	CHC	3.35
13.	Bartolo Colon	NYM	3.43
14.	Kenta Maeda	LAD	3.48
15.	Jerad Eickhoff	PHI	3.65
16.	Jeremy Hellickson	PHI	3.71
17.	Dan Straily	CIN	3.76
18.	Jeff Samardzija	SFG	3.81
19.	Jason Hammel	CHC	3.83
20.	Zach Davies	MIL	3.97
21.	Brandon Finnegan	CIN	3.98
22.	Tom Koehler	MIA	4.33
23.	Gio Gonzalez	WSN	4.57
24.	Jon Gray	COL	4.61
25.	Adam Wainwright	STL	4.62
25.	Jimmy Nelson	MIL	4.62
27.	Jaime Garcia	STL	4.67
28.	Mike Leake	STL	4.69
29.	Chad Bettis	COL	4.79
30.	Robbie Ray	ARI	4.90

WHIP

	PLAYER	TEAM	WHIP
1.	Max Scherzer	WSN	0.968
2.	Kyle Hendricks	CHC	0.979
3.	Jon Lester	CHC	1.016
4.	Madison Bumgarner	SFG	1.028
5.	Julio Teheran	ATL	1.053
6.	John Lackey	CHC	1.057
7.	Jake Arrieta	CHC	1.084
8.	Johnny Cueto	SFG	1.093
9.	Jose Fernandez	MIA	1.119
10.	Kenta Maeda	LAD	1.139
11.	Noah Syndergaard	NYM	1.149
12.	Jeremy Hellickson	PHI	1.153
13.	Jerad Eickhoff	PHI	1.160
14.	Tanner Roark	WSN	1.171
15.	Dan Straily	CIN	1.186
16.	Jeff Samardzija	SFG	1.200
17.	Jason Hammel	CHC	1.206
18.	Bartolo Colon	NYM	1.210
19.	Carlos Martinez	STL	1.224
20.	Zach Davies	MIL	1.249
21.	Jon Gray	COL	1.262
22.	Mike Leake	STL	1.319
23.	Gio Gonzalez	WSN	1.342
24.	Brandon Finnegan	CIN	1.360
25.	Jaime Garcia	STL	1.375
26.	Adam Wainwright	STL	1.404
27.	Chad Bettis	COL	1.414
28.	Tom Koehler	MIA	1.466
29.	Robbie Ray	ARI	1.468
30.	Jimmy Nelson	MIL	1.517

HOLDS

	PLAYER	TEAM	HOLDS
1.	Addison Reed	NYM	40
2.	Kyle Barraclough	MIA	29
2.	Neftali Feliz	PIT	29
4.	Joe Blanton	LAD	28
4.	Hector Neris	PHI	28
6.	Boone Logan	COL	27
7.	Felipe Rivero	TOT	26
8.	David Phelps	MIA	25
9.	Pedro Baez	LAD	23
9.	Will Smith	TOT	23
9.	Tony Watson	PIT	23
12.	Blake Treinen	WSN	22
13.	Brad Hand	SDP	21
13.	Pedro Strop	CHC	21
15.	Ryan Buchter	SDP	20
15.	Javier Lopez	SFG	20
15.	Tyler Thornburg	MIL	20
15.	Carlos Torres	MIL	20
19.	Josh Osich	SFG	18
19.	Hunter Strickland	SFG	18
21.	Daniel Hudson	ARI	17
21.	Kevin Siegrist	STL	17
23.	Jerry Blevins	NYM	16
24.	Antonio Bastardo	TOT	15
24.	Cory Gearrin	SFG	15
24.	David Hernandez	PHI	15
24.	Oliver Perez	WSN	15
24.	Edubray Ramos	PHI	15
24.	Blake Wood	CIN	15
30.	Derek Law	SFG	14
30.	Adam Liberatore	LAD	14
30.	Seung-hwan Oh	STL	14
30.	Sergio Romo	SFG	14

HR/9 IP

	PLAYER	TEAM	HR/9
1.	Noah Syndergaard	NYM	0.54
2.	Jose Fernandez	MIA	0.64
3.	Johnny Cueto	SF	0.61
4.	Carlos Martinez	STL	0.69
5.	Kyle Hendricks	CHC	0.71
6.	Tanner Roark	WAS	0.73
7.	Jake Arrieta	CHC	0.73
8.	Jon Lester	CHC	0.93
9.	Gio Gonzalez	WAS	0.96
10.	Jon Gray	COL	0.96
11.	Adam Wainwright	STL	1.00
12.	Mike Leake	STL	1.02
13.	Kenta Maeda	LAD	1.02
14.	Madison Bumgarner	SF	1.03
15.	Julio Teheran	ATL	1.05
16.	Jeff Samardzija	SF	1.06
17.	Chad Bettis	COL	1.06
18.	John Lackey	CHC	1.10
19.	Zach Davies	MIL	1.10
20.	Tom Koehler	MIA	1.12
21.	Bartolo Colon	NYM	1.13
22.	Jeremy Hellickson	PHI	1.14
23.	Max Scherzer	WAS	1.22
24.	Robbie Ray	ARI	1.24
25.	Jimmy Nelson	MIL	1.25
26.	Jason Hammel	CHC	1.35
27.	Jaime Garcia	STL	1.36
28.	Jerad Eickhoff	PHI	1.37
29.	Dan Straily	CIN	1.46
30.	Brandon Finnegan	CIN	1.52

AMERICAN LEAGUE

AL TEAM BATTING STATS

Team	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	CS	BB	SO	AVG	OBP	SLG	OPS	TB	GDP	HBP	SAC	SF	IBB	LOB
BOSTON	5670	878	1598	343	25	208	836	83	24	558	1160	.282	.348	.461	.810	2615	137	43	8	40	34	1162
DETROIT	5526	750	1476	252	30	211	719	58	29	493	1303	.267	.331	.438	.769	2421	135	53	17	38	32	1105
CLEVELAND	5484	777	1435	308	29	185	733	134	31	531	1246	.262	.329	.430	.759	2356	137	49	31	60	16	1084
TEXAS	5525	765	1446	257	23	215	746	99	36	436	1220	.262	.322	.433	.755	2394	114	70	18	40	23	1038
KANSAS CITY	5552	675	1450	264	33	147	640	121	35	382	1224	.261	.312	.400	.712	2221	134	45	38	34	23	1049
LOS ANGELES	5431	717	1410	279	20	156	686	73	34	471	991	.260	.322	.405	.726	2197	147	51	36	49	21	1037
SEATTLE	5583	768	1446	251	17	223	735	56	28	506	1288	.259	.326	.430	.756	2400	138	72	24	41	29	1099
CHICAGO	5550	686	1428	277	33	168	656	77	36	455	1285	.257	.317	.410	.727	2275	122	53	29	44	16	1105
BALTIMORE	5524	744	1413	265	6	253	710	19	13	468	1324	.256	.317	.443	.760	2449	119	44	17	36	19	1065
NEW YORK	5458	680	1378	245	20	183	647	72	22	475	1188	.252	.315	.405	.720	2212	121	42	21	49	19	1098
MINNESOTA	5618	722	1409	288	35	200	690	91	32	513	1426	.251	.316	.421	.738	2367	96	44	27	43	24	1124
TORONTO	5479	759	1358	276	18	221	728	54	24	632	1362	.248	.330	.426	.755	2333	153	55	26	40	16	1120
HOUSTON	5545	724	1367	291	29	198	689	102	44	554	1452	.247	.319	.417	.735	2310	134	47	27	31	31	1086
OAKLAND	5500	653	1352	270	21	169	634	50	23	442	1145	.246	.304	.395	.699	2171	142	33	13	34	19	1036
TAMPA BAY	5481	672	1333	288	32	216	647	60	37	449	1482	.243	.307	.426	.733	2333	88	69	18	28	20	1060

AL TEAM PITCHING STATS

Team	W	L	ERA	CG	SHO	SV	IP	H	R	ER	HR	BB	IBB	SO	HB	BK	WP	WHIP	AVG	GIDP	SB
TORONTO	89	73	3.78	0	10	43	1459.1	1340	666	613	183	461	10	1314	59	7	50	1.234	.242	127	84
CLEVELAND	94	67	3.84	5	11	37	1445.0	1330	676	617	186	461	34	1398	34	7	49	1.239	.243	103	51
SEATTLE	86	76	4.00	2	8	49	1457.0	1410	707	647	213	460	30	1318	55	7	52	1.283	.253	135	81
BOSTON	93	69	4.00	9	5	43	1439.2	1342	694	640	176	490	16	1362	65	0	52	1.273	.246	117	59
HOUSTON	84	78	4.06	2	8	44	1468.0	1441	701	663	181	453	19	1396	39	2	98	1.290	.256	113	67
CHICAGO	78	84	4.10	7	10	43	1446.2	1422	715	659	185	521	30	1270	68	2	72	1.343	.257	125	89
NEW YORK	84	78	4.16	0	10	48	1428.1	1358	702	660	214	444	15	1393	57	2	52	1.262	.248	100	86
TAMPA BAY	68	94	4.20	1	8	42	1426.1	1395	713	665	210	491	25	1357	32	7	61	1.322	.255	109	91
KANSAS CITY	81	81	4.21	3	7	41	1440.0	1433	712	674	206	517	8	1287	60	7	55	1.354	.259	117	55
BALTIMORE	89	73	4.22	1	9	54	1432.0	1408	715	671	183	545	23	1248	51	3	59	1.364	.258	145	69
DETROIT	86	75	4.24	3	8	47	1428.0	1417	721	672	182	462	25	1232	51	4	44	1.316	.260	129	71
LOS ANGELES	74	88	4.28	4	12	29	1421.1	1480	727	676	208	498	27	1136	56	10	47	1.392	.269	126	93
TEXAS	95	67	4.37	1	6	56	1443.0	1441	757	700	201	534	16	1154	53	5	45	1.369	.260	168	82
OAKLAND	69	93	4.51	2	7	42	1433.1	1459	761	718	185	464	28	1188	50	3	70	1.342	.263	125	75
MINNESOTA	59	103	5.08	4	3	26	1443.0	1617	889	814	221	479	26	1191	41	7	83	1.453	.283	155	78

2016 AL STANDINGS

AL EAST	WON	LOST	PCT	GB	HOME	ROAD	RS	RA	DIFF	STRK	L10
BOSTON	93	69	.574	-	47-34	46-35	878	694	184	L2	5-5
BALTIMORE	89	73	.549	4	50-31	39-42	744	715	29	W1	7-3
TORONTO	89	73	.549	4	46-35	43-38	759	666	93	W2	6-4
NEW YORK	84	78	.519	9	48-33	36-45	680	702	-22	L1	5-5
TAMPA BAY	68	94	.420	25	36-45	32-49	672	713	-41	W2	3-7

AL CENTRAL	WON	LOST	PCT	GB	HOME	ROAD	RS	RA	DIFF	STRK	L10
CLEVELAND	94	67	.584	-	53-28	41-39	777	676	101	W3	6-4
DETROIT	86	75	.534	8	45-35	41-40	750	721	29	L2	5-5
KANSAS CITY	81	81	.500	13.5	47-34	34-47	675	712	-37	L4	4-6
CHICAGO	78	84	.481	16.5	45-36	33-48	686	715	-29	L2	6-4
MINNESOTA	59	103	.364	35.5	30-51	29-52	722	889	-167	W2	4-6

AL WEST	WON	LOST	PCT	GB	HOME	ROAD	RS	RA	DIFF	STRK	L10
TEXAS	95	67	.586	-	53-28	42-39	765	757	8	L2	5-5
SEATTLE	86	76	.531	9	44-37	42-39	768	707	61	L2	6-4
HOUSTON	84	78	.519	11	43-38	41-40	724	701	23	L1	3-7
LOS ANGELES	74	88	.457	21	40-41	34-47	717	727	-10	W1	8-2
OAKLAND	69	93	.426	26	34-47	35-46	653	761	-108	W2	3-7

2016 POSTSEASON

2016 AL WILD CARD GAME

Blue Jays over Orioles

2016 AL DIVISION SERIES

Blue Jays over Rangers, 3 games

Indians over Red Sox, 3 games

2016 AL CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES

Indians over Blue Jays, 5 games

2016 WORLD SERIES

Cubs over Indians, 7 games

PRESENTED BY:

NATIONAL LEAGUE

NL TEAM BATTING STATS

Team	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	CS	BB	SO	AVG	OBP	SLG	OPS	TB	GDP	HBP	SAC	SF	IBB	LOB
COLORADO	5614	845	1544	318	47	204	805	66	39	494	1330	.275	.336	.457	.794	2568	113	40	54	34	35	1089
MIAMI	5547	655	1460	259	42	128	626	71	28	447	1213	.263	.322	.394	.716	2187	140	54	46	38	40	1171
ARIZONA	5665	752	1479	285	56	190	709	137	31	463	1427	.261	.320	.432	.752	2446	117	50	43	38	43	1113
SAN FRANCISCO	5565	715	1437	280	54	130	675	79	36	572	1107	.258	.329	.398	.728	2215	120	42	42	46	43	1188
PITTSBURGH	5542	729	1426	277	32	153	696	110	45	561	1334	.257	.332	.402	.734	2226	133	81	41	36	39	1173
CHICAGO	5503	808	1409	293	30	199	767	66	34	656	1339	.256	.343	.429	.772	2359	107	96	42	37	45	1217
CINCINNATI	5487	716	1403	277	33	164	678	139	51	452	1284	.256	.316	.408	.724	2238	129	52	58	44	37	1014
WASHINGTON	5490	763	1403	268	29	203	735	121	39	536	1252	.256	.326	.426	.751	2338	102	64	48	63	49	1105
ATLANTA	5514	649	1404	295	27	122	615	75	34	502	1240	.255	.321	.384	.705	2119	145	59	64	52	60	1161
ST. LOUIS	5548	779	1415	299	32	225	745	35	26	526	1318	.255	.325	.442	.767	2453	117	70	37	41	28	1113
LOS ANGELES	5518	725	1376	272	21	189	680	45	26	525	1321	.249	.319	.409	.728	2257	120	58	30	32	31	1106
NEW YORK	5459	671	1342	240	19	218	649	42	18	517	1302	.246	.316	.417	.733	2274	123	62	35	41	43	1120
MILWAUKEE	5330	671	1299	249	19	194	641	181	56	599	1543	.244	.322	.407	.729	2168	131	37	53	39	34	1071
PHILADELPHIA	5434	610	1305	231	35	161	574	96	45	424	1376	.240	.301	.384	.685	2089	112	58	46	30	33	1043
SAN DIEGO	5419	686	1275	257	26	177	654	125	45	449	1500	.235	.299	.390	.689	2115	93	58	36	36	30	965

NL TEAM PITCHING STATS

Team	W	L	ERA	CG	SHO	SV	IP	H	R	ER	HR	BB	IBB	SO	HBP	BK	WP	WHIP	AVG	GIDP	SB
CHICAGO	103	58	3.15	5	15	38	1459.2	1125	556	511	163	495	24	1441	63	0	80	1.110	.212	98	133
WASHINGTON	95	67	3.51	1	12	46	1459.2	1272	612	570	155	468	43	1476	57	4	47	1.192	.234	124	54
NEW YORK	87	75	3.57	1	13	55	1447.0	1397	617	574	152	439	39	1396	35	7	50	1.269	.254	117	135
SAN FRANCISCO	87	75	3.65	10	11	43	1460.1	1334	631	593	158	439	30	1309	46	6	40	1.214	.243	120	71
LOS ANGELES	91	71	3.70	3	15	47	1453.0	1266	638	598	165	464	51	1510	53	5	58	1.191	.233	84	87
MIAMI	79	82	4.05	0	12	55	1435.0	1358	682	646	152	595	62	1379	61	3	66	1.361	.251	119	76
MILWAUKEE	73	89	4.08	0	7	46	1434.1	1450	733	650	178	532	33	1175	66	2	48	1.382	.263	123	92
ST. LOUIS	86	76	4.08	2	10	38	1448.1	1432	712	656	159	475	35	1290	52	1	50	1.317	.258	149	85
PITTSBURGH	78	83	4.21	5	5	51	1450.2	1490	758	679	180	533	28	1232	68	7	71	1.395	.267	150	102
SAN DIEGO	68	94	4.43	1	9	35	1440.0	1425	770	708	183	569	44	1222	53	3	67	1.385	.258	147	98
ATLANTA	68	93	4.51	1	9	39	1447.2	1414	779	725	177	547	55	1227	70	4	83	1.355	.256	106	132
PHILADELPHIA	71	91	4.63	4	12	43	1437.0	1468	796	739	213	466	30	1299	51	9	57	1.346	.265	121	70
CINCINNATI	68	94	4.91	2	8	28	1442.0	1457	854	786	258	636	31	1241	78	12	61	1.451	.263	118	108
COLORADO	75	87	4.91	2	9	37	1429.1	1532	860	779	181	547	38	1223	70	5	72	1.455	.274	128	100
ARIZONA	69	93	5.09	2	7	31	1451.1	1563	890	821	202	603	57	1318	57	7	69	1.492	.275	125	63

2016 NL STANDINGS

NL EAST	WON	LOST	PCT	GB	HOME	ROAD	RS	RA	DIFF	STRK	L10
WASHINGTON	95	67	.586	-	50-31	45-36	763	612	151	W2	6–4
NEW YORK	87	75	.537	8	44-37	43-38	671	617	54	L1	7–3
MIAMI	79	82	.491	15.5	40-40	39-42	655	682	-27	L2	3–7
PHILADELPHIA	71	91	.438	24	37-44	34-47	610	796	-186	W1	2–8
ATLANTA	68	93	.422	26.5	31-50	37-43	649	779	-130	W2	8–2

NL CENTRAL	WON	LOST	PCT	GB	HOME	ROAD	RS	RA	DIFF	STRK	L10
CHICAGO	103	58	.640	-	57-24	46-34	808	556	252	W1	7–3
ST. LOUIS	86	76	.531	17.5	38-43	48-33	779	712	67	W4	6–4
PITTSBURGH	78	83	.484	25	38-42	40-41	729	758	-29	L3	2–8
MILWAUKEE	73	89	.451	30.5	41-40	32-49	671	733	-62	W2	5–5
CINCINNATI	68	94	.420	35.5	38-43	30-51	716	854	-138	L1	5–5

NL WEST	WON	LOST	PCT	GB	HOME	ROAD	RS	RA	DIFF	STRK	L10
LOS ANGELES	91	71	.562	-	53-28	38-43	725	638	87	L3	5–5
SAN FRANCISCO	87	75	.537	4	45-36	42-39	715	631	84	W4	7–3
COLORADO	75	87	.463	16	42-39	33-48	845	860	-15	L2	2–8
ARIZONA	69	93	.426	22	33-48	36-45	752	890	-138	W3	5–5
SAN DIEGO	68	94	.420	23	39-42	29-52	686	770	-84	L4	4–6

2016 POSTSEASON

2016 NL WILD CARD GAME
Giants over Mets
2016 NL DIVISION SERIES
Cubs over Giants, 4 games
Dodgers over Nationals, 5 games
2016 NL CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES
Cubs over Dodgers, 6 games
2016 WORLD SERIES
Cubs over Indians, 7 games

AMERICAN LEAGUE

GAMES BY POSITION

BALTIMORE ORIOLES

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
D. Alvarez	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
P. Alvarez	109	0	0	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	87
J. Borbon	6	0	0	0	0	0	6	3	3	0	0
M. Bourn	24	0	0	0	0	0	24	13	3	13	0
C. Davis	157	0	152	0	0	0	3	0	0	3	2
R. Flaherty	74	0	7	1	40	13	9	3	0	6	0
J. Hardy	115	0	0	0	0	115	0	0	0	0	0
P. Janish	14	0	0	0	9	6	0	0	0	0	0
A. Jones	152	0	0	0	0	0	152	0	152	0	0
C. Joseph	49	48	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H. Soo Kim	95	0	0	0	0	0	91	91	0	0	0
M. Machado	157	0	0	0	114	45	0	0	0	0	0
T. Mancini	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
S. Pearce	25	0	10	1	0	0	12	7	0	6	1
F. Pena	14	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N. Reimold	104	0	0	0	0	0	95	62	8	32	2
J. Rickard	85	0	0	0	0	0	82	31	13	51	0
J. Schoop	162	0	0	162	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
D. Stubbs	20	0	0	0	0	0	18	6	1	13	1
M. Trumbo	159	0	6	0	0	0	96	1	0	95	59
M. Wieters	124	117	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3

BOSTON RED SOX

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
A. Benintendi	34	0	0	0	0	0	32	29	5	0	0
M. Betts	158	0	0	0	0	0	157	0	0	157	0
X. Bogaerts	157	0	0	0	0	157	0	0	0	0	0
J. Bradley	156	0	0	0	0	0	156	0	156	0	0
B. Brentz	25	0	0	0	0	0	22	22	0	0	1
R. Castillo	9	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	1	1	4
R. Hanigan	35	34	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
M. Hernandez	40	0	0	14	10	2	0	0	0	0	2
A. Hill	47	0	0	4	44	0	0	0	0	0	1
B. Holaday	14	13	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
B. Holt	94	0	0	8	17	7	68	64	0	5	1
R. LaMarre	6	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	0	1	0
S. Leon	78	74	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
D. Marrero	13	0	0	6	4	4	0	0	0	0	1
M. Martinez	4	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	2	1
M. Miller	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Y. Moncada	8	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	3
D. Ortiz	151	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	140
D. Pedroia	154	0	0	152	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H. Ramirez	147	0	133	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
J. Rutledge	28	0	0	5	17	1	0	0	0	0	0
P. Sandoval	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
T. Shaw	145	0	50	0	105	0	1	1	0	0	2
B. Swihart	19	6	0	0	0	0	13	13	0	0	0
C. Vazquez	57	56	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
C. Young	76	0	0	0	0	0	69	63	3	3	2

CHICAGO WHITE SOX

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
J. Abreu	159	0	152	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
T. Anderson	99	0	0	0	0	99	0	0	0	0	0
A. Avila	57	54	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
M. Cabrera	151	0	0	0	0	0	147	147	0	0	4
J. Coats	28	0	0	0	0	0	18	7	0	11	6
M. Davidson	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
A. Eaton	157	0	0	0	0	0	156	1	48	121	1
T. Frazier	158	0	7	0	149	0	0	0	0	0	2
A. Garcia	120	0	0	0	0	0	55	11	0	46	63
L. Garcia	18	0	0	0	0	0	16	0	16	0	0
A. Jackson	54	0	0	0	0	0	54	0	54	0	0
B. Lawrie	94	0	0	92	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
J. Morneau	58	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	54
O. Narvaez	34	34	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
D. Navarro	85	83	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
J. Rollins	41	0	0	0	0	35	0	0	0	0	4
T. Saladino	93	0	2	42	10	32	3	1	1	1	2
C. Sanchez	53	0	0	33	6	4	0	0	0	0	3
H. Sanchez	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
J. Sands	24	0	4	0	0	0	4	3	0	1	10
J. Shuck	81	0	0	0	0	0	65	3	60	2	10
K. Smith	7	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
C. Tilson	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0

CLEVELAND INDIANS

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
J. Aguilar	9	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
A. Almonte	67	0	0	0	0	0	58	34	2	36	0
M. Brantley	11	0	0	0	0	0	11	11	0	0	0
M. Byrd	34	0	0	0	0	0	31	14	0	21	1
L. Chisenhall	126	0	3	0	1	0	119	0	2	118	0
C. Cowgill	9	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	8	0
C. Crisp	20	0	0	0	0	0	13	13	0	0	2
R. Davis	134	0	0	0	0	0	128	66	80	1	1
C. Gimenez	68	59	4	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	1
Y. Gomes	74	73	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
E. Gonzalez	21	0	0	5	2	8	2	0	0	2	0
B. Guyer	38	0	0	0	0	0	33	26	0	7	0
J. Kipnis	156	0	0	151	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
F. Lindor	158	0	0	0	0	155	0	0	0	0	1
M. Martinez	59	0	0	21	2	5	27	9	11	9	3
A. Moore	9	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M. Napoli	150	0	98	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	51
T. Naquin	116	0	0	0	0	0	109	0	105	4	1
R. Perez	61	61	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
J. Ramirez	152	0	0	9	117	5	48	48	0	0	0
C. Santana	158	0	64	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	92
J. Uribe	73	0	0	0	68	0	0	0	0	0	1

DETROIT TIGERS

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
M. Aviles	68	0	0	10	9	6	39	8	1	32	1
E. Aybar	29	0	0	6	12	11	0	0	0	0	0
M. Cabrera	158	0	147	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	8
N. Castellanos	110	0	0	0	108	0	0	0	0	0	1
T. Collins	56	0	0	0	0	0	50	13	29	8	1
A. Gose	30	0	0	0	0	0	30	0	30	0	0
J. Hicks	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
J. Iglesias	137	0	0	0	0	136	0	0	0	0	0
J. Jones	13	0	0	0	6	0	5	0	5	0	2
I. Kinsler	153	0	0	151	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
D. Machado	8	0	0	2	0	6	0	0	0	0	0
J. Martinez	120	0	0	0	0	0	118	0	0	118	1
V. Martinez	154	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	138
C. Maybin	94	0	0	0	0	0	91	0	91	0	1
J. McCann	105	99	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
C. McGehee	30	0	1	0	27	0	0	0	0	0	0
S. Moya	31	0	0	0	0	0	26	8	0	18	3
A. Presley	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	0	0
A. Romine	109	0	20	12	44	14	25	1	22	2	4
J. Saltalamacchia	92	68	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
J. Upton	153	0	0	0	0	0	150	146	6	0	2
B. Wilson	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

HOUSTON ASTROS

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
J. Altuve	161	0	0	148	0	1	0	0	0	0	13
A. Bregman	49	0	0	3	40	6	1	1	0	0	3
J. Castro	113	111	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C. Correa	153	0	0	0	0	153	0	0	0	0	0
M. Duffy	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
E. Gattis	128	55	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	71
C. Gomez	85	0	0	0	0	0	78	0	78	0	5
M. Gonzalez	141	0	92	14	22	11	19	18	1	0	3
Y. Gurriel	36	0	5	0	21	0	1	1	0	0	7
T. Hernandez	41	0	0	0	0	0	38	22	15	6	0
T. Kemp	59	0	0	5	0	0	39	37	1	1	8
E. Kratz	15	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
J. Marisnick	118	0	0	0	0	0	105	26	74	5	5
C. Moran	9	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
C. Rasmus	107	0	0	0	0	0	103	87	21	11	2
A. Reed	45	0	35	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
G. Springer	162	0	0	0	0	0	149	0	1	148	12
M. Stassi	9	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
P. Tucker	48	0	0	0	0	0	21	19	0	3	22
L. Valbuena	90	0	8	1	81	0	0	0	0	0	0
T. White	86	0	58	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	15
D. Worth	16	0	0	6	5	2	0	0	0	0	2

KANSAS CITY ROYALS

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
B. Burns	24	0	0	0	0	0	17	6	11	3	4
D. Butera	56	51	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
L. Cain	103	0	0	0	0	0	101	0	72	29	0
C. Colon	54	0	0	32	15	4	0	0	0	0	1
T. Cruz	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C. Cuthbert	128	0	0	0	127	0	0	0	0	0	0
H. Dozier	8	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	7	1
J. Dyson	107	0	0	0	0	0	95	19	57	21	8
B. Eibner	26	0	0	0	0	0	18	9	0	9	3
A. Escobar	162	0	0	0	0	162	0	0	0	0	0
R. Fuentes	13	0	0	0	0	0	12	3	0	9	1
A. Gordon	128	0	0	0	0	0	126	126	0	0	0
T. Gore	17	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	4
E. Hosmer	158	0	154	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
O. Infante	39	0	0	39	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
W. Merrifield	81	0	1	65	5	0	16	13	0	4	1
R. Mondesi	47	0	0	42	0	7	0	0	0	0	0
K. Morales	154	0	7	0	0	0	5	0	0	5	138
M. Moustakas	27	0	0	0	26	0	0	0	0	0	0
D. Nava	9	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
P. Orlando	128	0	0	0	0	0	122	0	37	89	1
S. Perez	139	128	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8

LOS ANGELES ANGELS

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
J. Bandy	70	68	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
N. Buss	36	0	0	0	0	0	31	24	3	5	1
K. Calhoun	157	0	0	0	0	0	154	0	0	154	2
J. Choi	54	0	27	0	0	0	20	20	0	0	6
K. Cowart	31	0	1	16	21	0	0	0	0	0	0
C. Cron	116	0	97	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
T. Cunningham	20	0	0	0	0	0	18	17	1	1	1
Y. Escobar	132	0	0	0	130	0	0	0	0	0	0
C. Gentry	14	0	0	0	0	0	13	12	1	0	1
J. Giavotella	99	0	0	97	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
J. Graterol	9	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
J. Marte	88	0	29	0	22	0	27	27	0	0	4
D. Nava	45	0	0	0	0	0	37	37	0	2	1
R. Ortega	66	0	0	0	0	0	59	46	10	9	2
C. Pennington	74	0	3	58	1	17	0	0	0	0	1
C. Perez	87	82	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
G. Petit	89	0	0	50	10	32	7	6	0	1	3
A. Pujols	152	0	28	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	123
S. Robinson	65	0	0	0	0	0	55	34	19	5	1
B. Ryan	17	0	0	0	0	0	16	1	1	0	0
A. Simmons	124	0	0	0	0	124	0	0	0	0	0
G. Soto	26	23	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
M. Trout	159	0	0	0	0	0	148	0	148	0	11

AP Images

MINNESOTA TWINS

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
O. Arcia	32	0	0	0	0	0	29	16	0	15	1
J. Beresford	10	0	6	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
B. Buxton	92	0	0	0	0	0	92	0	92	0	0
J. Centeno	55	53	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
B. Dozier	155	0	0	151	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
E. Escobar	105	0	0	6	23	71	2	2	0	0	2
R. Grossman	99	0	0	0	0	0	75	75	1	0	19
M. Kepler	113	0	2	0	0	0	112	0	4	108	0
D. Mastroianni	7	0	0	0	0	0	6	1	1	4	0
J. Mauer	134	0	95	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	34
J. Murphy	26	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
E. Nunez	91	0	0	5	33	51	0	0	0	0	6
B. Park	62	0	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	36
T. Plouffe	84	0	13	0	63	0	0	0	0	0	7
J. Polanco	69	0	0	5	9	47	0	0	0	0	1
E. Rosario	92	0	0	0	0	0	89	57	37	1	0
M. Sano	116	0	0	0	42	0	38	0	0	38	36
D. Santana	75	0	0	3	1	3	61	17	40	6	4
L. Schafer	26	0	0	0	0	0	22	12	3	8	1
K. Suzuki	106	99	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
K. Vargas	47	0	32	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13

NEW YORK YANKEES

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
D. Ackley	28	0	13	1	0	0	9	0	0	9	3
T. Austin	31	0	27	0	0	0	5	2	0	3	1
C. Beltran	99	0	0	0	0	0	60	0	0	60	34
B. Butler	12	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
S. Castro	151	0	0	150	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
I. Davis	8	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
J. Ellsbury	148	0	0	0	0	0	148	0	148	0	0
B. Gamel	6	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	5	0
B. Gardner	148	0	0	0	0	0	147	147	3	0	0
D. Gregorius	153	0	0	0	0	153	0	0	0	0	0
C. Headley	140	0	0	0	140	0	0	0	0	0	1
A. Hicks	123	0	0	0	0	0	119	25	24	86	4
A. Judge	27	0	0	0	0	0	27	0	0	27	0
B. McCann	130	92	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	32
C. Parmelee	6	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
R. Refsnyder	58	0	25	8	1	0	27	5	0	23	0
A. Rodriguez	65	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	57
A. Romine	62	50	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
G. Sanchez	53	36	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17
D. Solano	9	0	0	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	1
M. Teixeira	116	0	110	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
R. Torreyes	72	0	0	14	34	15	2	0	0	2	4
M. Williams	12	0	0	0	0	0	11	2	2	7	1
E. Young	6	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	4

OAKLAND ATHLETICS

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
A. Alcantara	16	0	0	3	0	2	5	0	4	1	2
Y. Alonso	156	0	145	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	5
B. Burns	73	0	0	0	0	0	70	0	69	4	0
B. Butler	85	0	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50
M. Canha	16	0	5	0	3	0	5	3	0	3	1
C. Coghlan	51	0	0	20	17	0	15	4	0	12	2
C. Crisp	102	0	0	0	0	0	88	58	36	0	12
K. Davis	150	0	0	0	0	0	93	93	0	0	53
B. Eibner	44	0	0	0	0	0	38	4	19	19	1
R. Healy	72	0	0	0	72	0	0	0	0	0	0
T. Ladendorf	45	0	0	30	3	0	2	0	1	1	1
A. Lambo	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
J. Lowrie	87	0	0	82	0	2	0	0	0	0	5
B. Maxwell	33	29	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
M. McBride	20	16	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	3
M. Muncy	51	0	0	21	1	0	21	4	0	17	3
R. Nunez	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
M. Olson	11	0	4	0	0	0	5	0	0	5	0
J. Phegley	26	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C. Pinder	22	0	0	13	0	7	0	0	0	0	2
J. Reddick	68	0	0	0	0	0	68	0	0	68	2
M. Semien	159	0	0	0	0	159	0	0	0	0	0
J. Smolinski	99	0	0	0	0	0	93	18	49	29	1
D. Valencia	130	0	18	0	68	0	38	1	0	37	6
S. Vogt	137	113	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23
J. Wendle	28	0	0	28	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

XANDER BOGAERTS

CARLOS BELTRAN

SEATTLE MARINERS

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
N. Aoki	118	0	0	0	0	0	113	99	15	0	0
R. Cano	161	0	0	157	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
S. Clevenger	22	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
N. Cruz	155	0	0	0	0	0	48	0	0	48	107
M. Freeman	13	0	0	5	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
B. Gamel	27	0	0	0	0	0	26	2	1	24	0
F. Gutierrez	98	0	0	0	0	0	70	9	0	64	15
G. Heredia	45	0	0	0	0	0	43	35	1	14	0
C. Iannetta	94	93	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
D. Lee	104	0	84	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
A. Lind	126	0	101	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16
K. Marte	119	0	0	0	0	119	0	0	0	0	0
L. Martin	143	0	0	0	0	0	143	0	143	0	0
S. O'Malley	89	0	0	12	7	36	34	15	5	19	1
D. Robertson	9	0	0	0	0	0	8	6	1	3	0
S. Romero	9	0	1	0	0	0	8	6	0	2	0
L. Sardinas	32	0	3	3	3	18	1	1	0	0	0
K. Seager	158	0	0	0	156	0	0	0	0	0	2
S. Smith	137	0	0	0	0	0	109	35	0	74	14
J. Sucre	9	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C. Taylor	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
D. Vogelbach	8	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
M. Zunino	55	52	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2

TAMPA BAY RAYS

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
O. Arcia	21	0	0	0	0	0	14	3	0	11	3
T. Beckham	64	0	6	19	7	25	0	0	0	0	3
C. Casali	84	76	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
H. Conger	49	47	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
J. Decker	19	0	0	0	0	0	16	3	2	13	1
C. Dickerson	148	0	0	0	0	0	78	76	0	2	62
M. Duffy	21	0	0	0	1	18	0	0	0	0	1
L. Forsythe	127	0	0	118	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
N. Franklin	60	0	9	8	0	5	25	18	0	7	8
B. Guyer	63	0	0	0	0	0	50	25	18	12	12
D. Jennings	65	0	0	0	0	0	62	33	30	0	2
K. Kiermaier	105	0	0	0	0	0	104	0	104	0	0
E. Longoria	160	0	0	0	152	0	0	0	0	0	8
M. Mahtook	65	0	0	0	0	0	61	26	23	18	1
L. Maile	42	37	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
B. Miller	152	0	39	0	0	106	1	1	0	0	7
L. Morrison	107	0	83	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17
T. Motter	34	0	1	6	4	9	13	7	0	6	1
S. Pearce	60	0	30	14	2	0	0	0	0	0	12
J. Querecuto	4	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
A. Ramirez	17	0	0	1	0	16	0	0	0	0	0
R. Shaffer	20	0	11	0	4	0	2	0	0	2	5
S. Souza	120	0	0	0	0	0	113	0	3	111	7
B. Wilson	28	28	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

TEXAS RANGERS

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
H. Alberto	35	0	4	6	11	9	0	0	0	0	6
E. Andrus	147	0	0	0	0	147	0	0	0	0	0
C. Beltran	52	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0	9	39
A. Beltre	153	0	0	0	141	0	0	0	0	0	12
R. Chirinos	57	54	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
S. Choo	48	0	0	0	0	0	43	0	0	43	4
D. DeShields	74	0	0	0	0	0	59	26	33	0	6
I. Desmond	156	0	0	0	0	0	156	29	130	0	0
P. Fielder	89	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	80
J. Gallo	17	0	1	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	5
C. Gomez	33	0	0	0	0	0	33	28	7	6	0
B. Holaday	30	27	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
J. Hoying	39	0	0	0	0	0	31	13	1	17	3
J. Lucroy	47	44	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N. Mazara	145	0	0	0	0	0	143	38	0	112	1
M. Moreland	147	0	139	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
B. Nicholas	15	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
R. Odor	150	0	0	146	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
J. Profar	90	0	17	19	25	11	14	14	0	0	6
R. Rua	99	0	31	0	2	0	65	60	4	3	4
J. Ruggiano	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
D. Stubbs	19	0	0	0	0	0	18	9	4	6	1
B. Wilson	42	42	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

TORONTO BLUE JAYS

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
D. Barney	104	0	0	41	32	25	5	5	0	0	0
J. Bautista	116	0	1	0	0	0	91	0	0	91	26
A. Burns	10	0	1	0	4	0	1	1	0	0	0
E. Carrera	110	0	0	0	0	0	100	45	5	65	4
D. Ceciliani	13	0	0	0	0	0	12	8	0	4	0
C. Colabello	10	0	8	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
M. Dominguez	5	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
J. Donaldson	155	0	0	0	137	0	0	0	0	0	19
E. Encarnacion	160	0	75	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	86
R. Goins	77	0	2	37	6	28	3	2	0	1	1
J. Lake	22	0	1	0	0	0	19	0	0	19	0
R. Martin	137	127	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	5
D. Navarro	16	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
J. Paredes	7	0	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	1	1
K. Pillar	146	0	0	0	0	0	146	0	146	0	0
D. Pompey	8	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	3
M. Saunders	140	0	0	0	0	0	128	106	1	22	9
J. Smoak	126	0	111	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
J. Thole	50	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
D. Travis	101	0	0	99	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
T. Tulowitzki	131	0	0	0	0	128	0	0	0	0	3
M. Upton	57	0	0	0	0	0	55	38	16	2	1

NATIONAL LEAGUE

GAMES BY POSITION

ARIZONA DIAMONDBACKS

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
N. Ahmed	90	0	0	0	0	88	0	0	0	0	0
M. Bourn	89	0	0	0	0	0	86	8	74	8	0
S. Brito	40	0	0	0	0	0	36	7	17	16	0
W. Castillo	113	107	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
B. Drury	134	0	1	16	29	0	89	62	0	32	0
M. Freeman	8	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	1	0
P. Goldschmidt	158	0	157	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
T. Gosewisch	33	31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
P. Gosselin	122	0	6	35	10	0	3	2	0	1	1
M. Haniger	34	0	0	0	0	0	31	9	22	4	0
O. Hernandez	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C. Herrmann	56	31	2	0	0	0	9	3	2	4	0
K. Jensen	17	0	4	0	0	0	5	4	0	1	1
J. Lamb	151	0	0	0	142	0	0	0	0	0	0
S. Miller	21	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
P. O'Brien	28	0	1	0	0	0	16	16	0	0	0
C. Owings	119	0	0	1	0	70	49	0	49	0	0
D. Peralta	48	0	0	0	0	0	48	0	8	44	0
A. Pollock	12	0	0	0	0	0	12	0	12	0	0
J. Segura	153	0	0	142	0	23	0	0	0	0	0
Y. Tomas	140	0	1	0	0	0	137	60	0	91	0
R. Weeks	108	0	0	0	0	0	38	36	0	2	6

ATLANTA BRAVES

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
E. Aybar	97	0	0	1	0	93	0	0	0	0	0
G. Beckham	85	0	0	51	15	11	0	0	0	0	0
E. Bonifacio	24	0	0	0	0	0	13	12	1	0	0
R. Brignac	13	0	0	4	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
D. Castro	47	0	0	16	9	20	0	0	0	0	0
C. d'Arnaud	84	0	0	10	19	21	13	8	4	1	0
T. Flowers	83	81	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
J. Francoeur	99	0	0	0	0	0	62	53	0	10	3
F. Freeman	158	0	158	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
A. Garcia	134	0	0	0	123	0	4	4	0	0	2
E. Inciarte	131	0	0	0	0	0	129	10	120	0	0
K. Johnson	49	0	1	26	0	0	6	6	0	0	0
M. Kemp	56	0	0	0	0	0	54	54	0	0	0
B. Lalli	10	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N. Markakis	158	0	1	0	0	0	150	0	0	150	5
H. Olivera	6	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	0	0
J. Peterson	115	0	0	87	1	0	16	15	1	0	0
A. Pierzynski	81	64	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
A. Recker	33	28	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
R. Ruiz	5	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
M. Smith	72	0	0	0	0	0	56	22	35	1	0
B. Snyder	37	0	1	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	0
D. Stubbs	20	0	0	0	0	0	13	4	10	0	0
D. Swanson	38	0	0	0	0	37	0	0	0	0	0
M. Tuiasosopo	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

CHICAGO CUBS

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
A. Almora	47	0	0	0	0	0	41	8	33	2	0
J. Baez	142	0	6	59	62	25	2	2	0	0	0
K. Bryant	155	0	9	0	107	1	69	60	1	14	1
J. Candelario	5	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
C. Coghlan	48	0	6	0	1	0	31	25	0	6	0
W. Contreras	76	57	3	0	0	0	24	24	0	0	0
T. Federowicz	17	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
D. Fowler	125	0	0	0	0	0	121	0	121	0	1
J. Heyward	142	0	0	0	0	0	141	0	24	131	0
R. Kalish	7	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	0	1	0
M. Kawasaki	14	0	0	10	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
T. La Stella	74	0	0	9	33	0	0	0	0	0	0
M. Montero	86	71	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
S. Patton	16	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
A. Rizzo	155	0	154	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
D. Ross	67	58	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
A. Russell	151	0	0	0	0	148	0	0	0	0	0
K. Schwarber	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0
J. Soler	86	0	0	0	0	0	60	53	0	7	7
P. Strop	55	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
M. Szczur	107	0	0	0	0	0	70	50	15	15	0
T. Wood	81	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	0
B. Zobrist	147	0	1	119	0	1	46	27	0	24	0

CINCINNATI REDS

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
T. Barnhart	115	108	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
J. Bruce	97	0	0	0	0	0	95	0	1	95	1
R. Cabrera	61	48	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Z. Cozart	121	0	0	0	0	111	0	0	0	0	1
I. De Jesus	104	0	12	22	14	30	1	1	0	0	0
A. Duvall	150	0	5	0	3	0	142	137	0	6	0
B. Hamilton	119	0	0	0	0	0	115	0	115	0	0
T. Holt	106	0	0	0	0	0	70	19	32	23	0
H. Iribarren	24	0	2	5	0	0	8	0	6	2	0
P. Kivlehan	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0
R. Lopez	8	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
D. Mesoraco	16	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
J. Pacheco	31	0	3	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	1
J. Peraza	72	0	0	12	0	31	21	8	13	0	1
B. Phillips	141	0	0	138	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
T. Renda	32	0	0	9	1	0	8	4	0	4	0
S. Schebler	82	0	0	0	0	0	67	13	18	41	0
S. Selsky	24	0	0	0	0	0	15	3	2	11	0
E. Suarez	159	0	0	0	151	2	0	0	0	0	1
J. Votto	158	0	154	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
K. Waldrop	15	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	0	2	1

COLORADO ROCKIES

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
C. Adames	121	0	0	11	11	47	0	0	0	0	0
N. Arenado	160	0	0	0	160	0	0	0	0	0	0
B. Barnes	48	0	0	0	0	0	43	29	13	2	0
C. Blackmon	143	0	0	0	0	0	138	0	138	0	0
S. Cardullo	27	0	15	0	0	0	4	2	0	3	0
D. Dahl	63	0	0	0	0	0	59	54	6	4	0
D. Descalso	99	0	16	14	4	31	7	7	0	0	4
D. Garneau	24	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C. Gonzalez	150	0	0	0	0	0	148	0	0	148	0
N. Hundley	83	79	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
D. LeMahieu	146	0	0	146	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
T. Murphy	21	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
G. Parra	102	0	19	0	0	0	79	60	11	16	0
J. Patterson	10	0	2	0	0	0	6	2	0	5	0
B. Paulsen	39	0	23	0	0	0	7	7	0	0	0
R. Raburn	113	0	5	0	0	0	49	47	0	2	6
M. Reynolds	118	0	115	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
T. Story	97	0	0	0	0	96	0	0	0	0	0
R. Tapia	22	0	0	0	0	0	11	2	9	1	0
P. Valaika	13	0	0	5	6	2	0	0	0	0	0
T. Wolters	71	59	0	7	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
R. Ynoa	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0

LOS ANGELES DODGERS

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
A. Barnes	21	9	0	7	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
C. Crawford	30	0	0	0	0	0	21	21	0	0	4
C. Culberson	34	0	0	10	4	11	2	2	0	0	0
A. Ellis	53	46	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
A. Ethier	16	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	0	0	1
A. Gonzalez	156	0	151	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Y. Grandal	126	115	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
E. Hernandez	109	0	0	11	5	2	62	41	22	7	1
M. Johnson	7	0	0	3	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
H. Kendrick	146	0	11	32	17	0	94	94	0	0	1
J. Pederson	137	0	0	0	0	0	132	0	132	0	0
Y. Puig	104	0	0	0	0	0	95	5	4	90	0
J. Reddick	47	0	0	0	0	0	42	0	0	42	0
C. Ruiz	14	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C. Seager	157	0	0	0	0	155	0	0	0	0	0
R. Segedin	40	0	9	0	6	0	13	7	0	7	0
C. Taylor	34	0	0	7	10	5	0	0	0	0	0
T. Thompson	80	0	0	0	0	0	71	24	32	28	0
A. Toles	48	0	0	0	0	0	32	18	9	8	0
J. Turner	151	0	1	0	144	0	0	0	0	0	2
C. Utley	138	0	0	134	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
S. Van Slyke	52	0	7	0	0	0	29	19	1	10	0
W. Venable	12	0	0	0	0	0	5	1	0	4	0
Z. Walters	3	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0

MIAMI MARLINS

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
R. Andino	13	0	0	3	1	1	2	2	0	0	0
O. Arcia	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
J. Bour	90	0	82	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
D. Dietrich	128	0	16	75	13	0	8	8	0	0	0
J. Francoeur	26	0	0	0	1	0	16	10	0	7	0
C. Gillespie	41	0	1	0	0	0	8	4	1	3	0
D. Gordon	79	0	0	78	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
A. Hechavarria	155	0	0	0	0	153	0	0	0	0	0
D. Hood	13	0	0	0	0	0	7	5	0	2	0
C. Johnson	113	0	81	0	11	0	2	2	0	0	0
D. Kelly	13	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
J. Mathis	41	38	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M. Ozuna	148	0	0	0	0	0	142	11	123	9	0
Y. Perez	12	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
M. Prado	153	0	0	0	150	0	0	0	0	0	1
J. Realmuto	137	129	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
M. Rojas	123	0	41	45	16	33	0	0	0	0	0
X. Scruggs	24	0	19	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0
G. Stanton	119	0	0	0	0	0	106	0	0	106	2
I. Suzuki	143	0	0	0	0	0	78	14	14	54	3
T. Telis	10	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C. Yelich	155	0	0	0	0	0	149	120	31	0	1

MILWAUKEE BREWERS

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
O. Arcia	55	0	0	0	0	53	0	0	0	0	0
R. Braun	135	0	0	0	0	0	127	127	0	2	3
K. Broxton	75	0	0	0	0	0	68	0	68	0	0
C. Carter	160	0	155	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
J. Elmore	59	0	0	3	4	0	20	14	2	4	0
R. Flores	104	0	2	0	0	0	83	13	29	49	0
S. Gennett	136	0	0	127	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
A. Hill	78	0	0	20	59	0	0	0	0	0	0
J. Lucroy	95	82	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
M. Maldonado	76	69	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
W. Middlebrooks	10	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
K. Nieuwenhuis	125	0	0	0	0	0	109	5	83	28	0
H. Perez	123	0	6	11	60	3	46	2	8	36	0
M. Pina	33	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
J. Pinto	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
A. Presley	47	0	0	0	0	0	28	12	5	13	0
M. Reed	8	0	0	0	0	0	7	2	5	0	0
Y. Rivera	35	0	0	13	15	5	0	0	0	0	0
D. Santana	77	0	0	0	0	0	67	4	3	62	0
A. Susac	9	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
J. Villar	156	0	0	11	42	108	0	0	0	0	0
C. Walsh	38	0	0	1	11	0	2	2	0	0	0
A. Wilkins	26	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0

AP Images

NEW YORK METS

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
J. Bruce	50	0	0	0	0	0	43	0	0	43	1
A. Cabrera	141	0	0	0	0	136	0	0	0	0	0
E. Campbell	40	0	21	1	7	0	2	2	0	0	0
G. Cecchini	4	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Y. Cespedes	132	0	0	0	0	0	122	80	63	0	4
M. Conforto	109	0	0	0	0	0	87	73	6	9	4
T. d'Arnaud	75	73	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
A. De Aza	130	0	0	0	0	0	76	22	46	14	0
L. Duda	47	0	45	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
W. Flores	103	0	27	18	51	8	0	0	0	0	0
C. Granderson	150	0	0	0	0	0	140	7	36	110	1
K. Johnson	82	0	2	26	21	1	9	9	0	0	0
T. Kelly	39	0	1	2	10	0	10	8	1	1	0
J. Lagares	79	0	0	0	0	0	71	1	68	2	0
J. Loney	100	0	97	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
B. Nimmo	32	0	0	0	0	0	22	13	4	7	0
K. Plawecki	48	45	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
J. Reyes	60	0	0	0	50	13	0	0	0	0	0
M. Reynolds	47	0	0	4	7	21	1	1	0	0	0
R. Rivera	65	59	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
T. Rivera	33	0	1	26	9	0	0	0	0	0	0
J. Ruggiano	8	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	6	1	0
N. Walker	113	0	0	111	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
D. Wright	37	0	0	0	36	0	0	0	0	0	0

PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
J. Alfaro	6	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
A. Altherr	57	0	0	0	0	0	57	20	10	42	0
C. Asche	71	0	0	0	0	0	57	57	0	0	0
A. Blanco	90	0	19	20	21	10	1	1	0	0	0
P. Bourjos	123	0	0	0	0	0	119	0	10	115	0
E. Burriss	39	0	2	5	0	3	3	3	0	0	1
A. Ellis	11	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
T. Featherston	19	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M. Franco	152	0	0	0	148	0	0	0	0	0	0
F. Galvis	158	0	0	0	0	156	0	0	0	0	0
T. Goeddel	92	0	0	0	0	0	77	69	0	12	0
C. Hernandez	155	0	0	149	0	4	0	0	0	0	0
O. Herrera	159	0	0	0	0	0	155	0	155	0	0
R. Howard	112	0	83	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
C. Hunter	13	0	0	0	0	0	12	10	0	2	0
T. Joseph	107	0	97	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
D. Lough	30	0	0	0	0	0	23	15	0	11	0
J. Paredes	76	0	0	1	0	0	36	23	0	19	0
R. Quinn	15	0	0	0	0	0	15	12	3	4	0
D. Ruf	43	0	14	0	0	0	13	13	0	0	0
C. Ruiz	48	47	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
C. Rupp	105	104	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

PITTSBURGH PIRATES

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
J. Bell	45	0	23	0	0	0	16	0	0	16	0
F. Cervelli	101	95	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
E. Diaz	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C. Figueroa	23	0	0	5	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
P. Florimon	18	0	0	8	0	6	0	0	0	0	0
A. Frazier	66	0	0	17	5	0	35	20	1	16	0
D. Freese	141	0	58	2	78	0	0	0	0	0	0
E. Fryer	36	32	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
A. Hanson	27	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
J. Harrison	131	0	0	128	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
J. Jaso	132	0	108	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
M. Joyce	140	0	0	0	0	0	66	26	0	43	4
J. Ho Kang	103	0	0	0	92	0	0	0	0	0	1
E. Kratz	18	17	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S. Marte	129	0	0	0	0	0	123	114	16	0	0
A. McCutchen	153	0	0	0	0	0	151	0	151	0	0
J. Mercer	149	0	0	0	0	146	0	0	0	0	0
M. Moroff	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M. Morse	6	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
G. Polanco	144	0	0	0	0	0	134	29	5	111	4
S. Rodriguez	140	0	57	29	11	27	32	10	5	17	0
J. Rogers	23	0	5	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
J. Stallings	5	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C. Stewart	34	31	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

YOENIS CESPEDES

ST. LOUIS CARDINALS

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
M. Adams	118	0	86	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M. Carpenter	129	0	45	40	54	0	0	0	0	0	1
A. Diaz	111	0	0	1	0	107	0	0	0	0	0
E. Fryer	24	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
G. Garcia	99	0	0	27	31	30	0	0	0	0	0
R. Grichuk	132	0	0	0	0	0	119	4	115	3	0
J. Gyorko	128	0	11	46	39	26	0	0	0	0	0
J. Hazelbaker	114	0	0	0	0	0	73	52	22	6	0
M. Holliday	110	0	10	0	0	0	85	85	0	0	8
C. Kelly	10	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
J. Martinez	12	0	1	0	0	0	4	4	0	0	0
M. McKenry	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Y. Molina	147	146	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
B. Moss	128	0	64	0	0	0	72	58	0	21	0
B. Pena	9	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
J. Peralta	82	0	0	0	67	7	0	0	0	0	1
T. Pham	78	0	0	0	0	0	66	30	34	5	0
S. Piscotty	153	0	1	0	0	0	150	0	10	146	0
A. Rosario	20	17	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
R. Tejada	23	0	0	3	10	7	0	0	0	0	0
K. Wong	121	0	0	88	0	0	17	7	8	4	0

SAN DIEGO PADRES

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
A. Amarista	65	0	0	28	5	12	10	5	0	5	0
O. Arcia	14	0	0	0	0	0	13	0	0	13	0
C. Asuaje	7	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C. Bethancourt	73	41	0	1	0	0	12	8	0	4	2
J. Blash	38	0	0	0	0	0	21	4	0	18	0
A. Dickerson	84	0	0	0	0	0	68	68	0	0	2
A. Hedges	8	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
T. Jankowski	131	0	0	0	0	0	114	9	87	22	0
J. Jay	90	0	0	0	0	0	86	8	72	9	0
M. Kemp	100	0	0	0	0	0	97	0	0	97	2
P. Kivlehan	5	0	0	0	0	0	5	1	0	4	0
M. Margot	10	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	9	1	0
W. Myers	157	0	149	0	1	0	10	3	0	7	0
N. Noonan	7	0	0	2	0	5	0	0	0	0	0
D. Norris	125	116	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
J. Pirela	15	0	0	12	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
A. Ramirez	128	0	0	0	0	111	3	0	0	3	1
H. Renfroe	11	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0	9	0
J. Rondon	8	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0
A. Rosales	105	0	1	36	41	15	3	2	0	1	1
H. Sanchez	26	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
L. Sardinas	34	0	0	1	0	32	0	0	0	0	0
R. Schimpf	89	0	0	68	14	0	1	1	0	0	0
Y. Solarte	109	0	2	15	96	0	0	0	0	0	0
C. Spangenberg	14	0	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M. Upton	92	0	0	0	0	0	90	83	11	1	0
B. Wallace	119	0	20	0	42	0	0	0	0	0	3
J Weeks	17	0	0	17	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

GREGOR BLANCO

SAN FRANCISCO GIANTS

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
E. Adrianza	40	0	0	7	7	13	0	0	0	0	0
G. Beckham	3	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
B. Belt	156	0	151	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	0
G. Blanco	106	0	0	0	0	0	75	29	18	34	0
T. Brown	75	60	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
B. Crawford	155	0	0	0	0	155	0	0	0	0	0
M. Duffy	70	0	0	0	69	0	0	0	0	0	0
C. Gillaspie	101	0	7	0	45	0	0	0	0	0	0
G. Green	18	0	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
G. Hernandez	26	0	0	0	0	0	22	2	14	6	0
E. Nunez	50	0	0	1	48	4	0	0	0	0	0
A. Pagan	129	0	0	0	0	0	127	123	4	0	0
J. Panik	127	0	0	126	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
J. Parker	63	0	0	0	0	0	37	17	1	21	4
R. Pena	30	0	0	17	12	4	0	0	0	0	0
H. Pence	106	0	0	0	0	0	102	0	0	102	0
B. Posey	146	123	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
D. Span	143	0	0	0	0	0	137	0	137	0	0
R. Tejada	13	0	0	1	13	0	0	0	0	0	0
K. Tomlinson	52	0	0	19	3	7	3	3	0	0	0
M. Williamson	54	0	0	0	0	0	36	13	0	23	1

WASHINGTON NATIONALS

PLAYER	G	C	1B	2B	3B	SS	OF	LF	CF	RF	DH
M. den Dekker	19	0	0	0	0	0	12	3	6	4	0
W. Difo	31	0	0	9	3	5	0	0	0	0	0
S. Drew	70	0	0	21	12	12	0	0	0	0	1
D. Espinosa	157	0	0	0	0	157	0	0	0	0	0
B. Goodwin	22	0	0	0	0	0	14	5	1	8	0
B. Harper	147	0	0	0	0	0	143	0	0	143	0
C. Heisey	83	0	0	0	0	0	44	25	3	16	1
S. Kieboom	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
J. Lobaton	39	38	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
D. Murphy	142	0	21	117	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
W. Ramos	131	128	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
A. Rendon	156	0	0	0	155	0	0	0	0	0	0
B. Revere	103	0	0	0	0	0	87	25	74	0	0
C. Robinson	104	0	46	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	1
P. Severino	16	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M. Taylor	76	0	0	0	0	0	69	1	64	5	0
T. Turner	73	0	0	30	0	2	45	0	45	0	0
J. Werth	143	0	0	0	0	0	133	131	0	2	6
R. Zimmerman	115	0	114	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

The Best Players of 2020

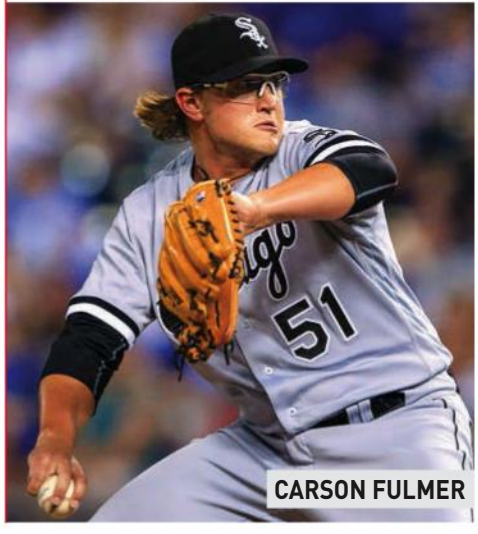
ANTHONY RIZZO

Major League Baseball is alive and well thanks in large part to the sheer volume of young talent. Mike Trout has already won a pair of MVP awards and just turned 25 in August, while the last two NL MVPs were Kris Bryant, 25, and Bryce Harper, 24. Looking years ahead, there are dozens of young players who could blossom into stars or become even better. Here's who we believe will be the very best players at each position in the 2020 season:

CATCHER: Gary Sanchez, Yankees
Sanchez lit the league on fire in his brief rookie stint with 20 homers in 229 plate appearances. He won't keep up that pace, but his Mike Piazza-esque skillset gives him the edge over Willson Contreras.

FIRST BASE: Anthony Rizzo, Cubs
Rizzo is one of five players to surpass 5 WAR and one of four players to surpass 30 homers in each of the past three seasons. He's only 27 years old, and that consistency — along with his defense — gives him an edge over Paul Goldschmidt and Wil Myers.

SECOND BASE: Yoan Moncada, White Sox
Moncada gets compared to a switch-hitting Robinson Cano, and by 2020, when he is 25, he should be approaching his peak. The top prospect in baseball, Moncada should hit for average and power and be a serious threat on the basepaths.


CARSON FULMER

THIRD BASE: Manny Machado, Orioles
There are plenty of qualified candidates among Machado, Nolan Arenado, Josh Donaldson and Kris Bryant, but Machado is the youngest of the group, is as good a defender as anyone, and has become a premier power hitter.

SHORTSTOP: Corey Seager, Dodgers
Shortstop is also crowded with Francisco Lindor, Carlos Correa and Xander Bogaerts, just to name a few, but Seager remains on top. His defense was shockingly good last season, and he's already the best hitter of the group at 22.

LEFT FIELD: Kris Bryant, Cubs
Sure, Bryant is more of a third baseman, but he played 60 games at left field last season and may move off of third base in the not-so-distant future. He led the NL in WAR by almost a full win and still has plenty of room for improvement.

CENTER FIELD: Mike Trout, Angels
This one's easy. Trout has amassed 47 WAR in his first five seasons, and 2020 will be his age-28 season, which should be firmly in his peak.

RIGHT FIELD: Bryce Harper, Nats
Harper hit only .243 last season, but he had a .373 on-base percentage. In 2020, Harper will be 27, and he should have re-established himself as a premier star in baseball by then. Will he still be on the Nats at that point? Stay tuned.

DESIGNATED HITTER: Kyle Schwarber, Cubs
Schwarber was built to be a designated hitter, and it wouldn't be surprising to see him on an American League team before long swatting home runs.

STARTING PITCHER: Clayton Kershaw, Dodgers
Kershaw will be 32 in 2020, but his dominance is unmatched in baseball. Realistically, his health is the only thing that could keep him off this list.

STARTING PITCHER: Noah Syndergaard, Mets
Syndergaard's exceptional velocity and low walk rate have helped him dominate in his first season-and-a-half. At age 27, he should remain a force to be reckoned with for the next decade.

STARTING PITCHER: Julio Urias, Dodgers
Urias was dominant at age 19 in 2016, so four seasons of experience should make him a great 1-2 punch with Kershaw in Los Angeles. He has a chance to become a truly special pitcher.

STARTING PITCHER: Alex Reyes, Cardinals
Reyes has struggled with walks in his short stint in the big leagues but still held a 1.57 ERA in 46 innings. His pure stuff is hard to match, and by age 25 in 2020, he should be a bona fide ace.

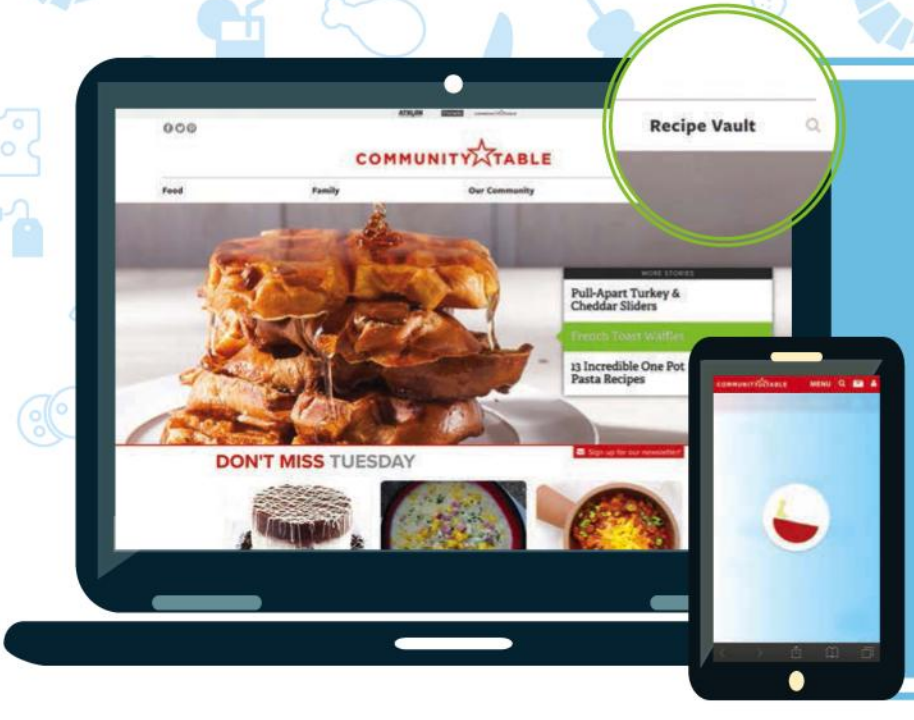
STARTING PITCHER: Madison Bumgarner, Giants
Bumgarner gets the slight edge over Chris Sale because of his younger age and lower risk of injury. In 2020, Bumgarner will be 30 years old and still dominant.

RELIEF PITCHER: Carson Fulmer, White Sox
The White Sox have acquired a glut of young starting pitchers, and with Fulmer nearly ready for the majors, his best route to success may be as a closer. As he showed at Vanderbilt, he can be absolutely dominant in short stints.

AP Images

COMMUNITY TABLE

Have you {UNLOCKED} Community Table's Recipe Vault?



SIGN UP TODAY & SAVE ALL YOUR FAVORITE RECIPES IN ONE CONVENIENT PLACE!

- Upload your own recipes
- Search, save and share your favorite recipes with family and friends
- Create mobile shopping lists on the go

VISIT COMMUNITYTABLE.COM

& CLICK ON RECIPE VAULT TO GET STARTED

BE COMFORTABLE
IN YOUR OWN JEANS
Wrangler®